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L. ANNAEI SENECAE TRAGOEDIAE

THE

MEDEA OF SENECA

WITH A

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

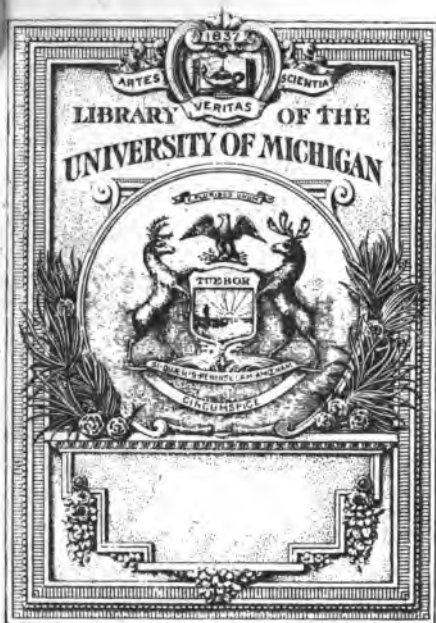
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CRAWFORDSVILLE, IND.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR

1896



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**CRAWFORDSVILLE, IND.
BROWER BROS., PRINTERS**

PREFACE

This little book represents a venture into new fields. In this country we have given much study, and rightly, to

ERRATA

- On page 13, line 9, for *peti* read *pete*.
 17, 16, after it insert *can*.
 29, verse 205, for *admovet* read *admovit*.
 40, 591, for *et* read *est*.
 58, line 14 from bottom, for *as taunt* read *a taunt*.
 63, line 14, for *crepit* read *crepuit*.
 66, 7 from bottom, for 339 read 339.

and seventeenth centuries (the most notable, perhaps, collection of "The Tenne Tragedies" in heroic and Al drine verse, published in London in 1581). but the itself, with suitable helps, has never been rendered acca ble to our students.

The present work is the outgrowth of the editor's own experience in using the tragedies in the class-room to sup plement study in the Comedy. From every point of view — Latinity, content, dramatic structure and the place they occupy in the Roman literature—these plays have been found abundantly worthy of study; while the fact that most of them can be compared directly with their Greek originals adds materially to their interest and value.



CHLAWFORDSVILLE, IND.
BROWER BROS., PRINTERS

PREFACE

This little book represents a venture into new fields. In this country we have given much study, and rightly, to the Latin Comedy, but have neglected almost entirely its counterpart, the Tragedy. While classical scholars on the continent of Europe, and especially in Germany, have considered the Senecan plays worthy of careful recension, hardly anything has been done in Great Britain or America, and I have not been able to discover any edition of any of the tragedies with English notes. Numerous experiments in translation into English verse were made in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (the most rotatable, perhaps, a collection of "The Tenne Tragedies" in heroic and Alexandrine verse, published in London in 1581), but the text itself, with suitable helps, has never been rendered accessible to our students.

The present work is the outgrowth of the editor's own experience in using the tragedies in the class-room to supplement study in the Comedy. From every point of view--Latinity, content, dramatic structure and the place they occupy in the Roman literature--these plays have been found abundantly worthy of study; while the fact that most of them can be compared directly with their Greek originals adds materially to their interest and value.

The *Medea* has been chosen for presentation because of its comparative excellence and because its authenticity is almost unquestioned. In the preparation of the notes it has been assumed that the reader is familiar with the essentials of the language, and only such points of form and syntax are noticed as present unusual difficulty. No grammatical references are given. In dealing with the subject-matter the aim has been rather to suggest than to state, thus leaving much for the student's own research to develop. Above all has it been desired, by the insertion of necessary references to authorities and cross-references to the text, to guide him to a mastery of the play itself. For the mythology free use is made of Latin (and occasionally of Greek) sources of information. The reader should have at hand especially a good edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

The text is that of Leo (Berlin, 1879), the few variations therefrom receiving mention in the notes. The various readings of the manuscripts and the conjectures and emendations of editors have been omitted from this preliminary edition. Division into acts and scenes has not been introduced into the body of the text, but is indicated at the top of the page.

Wabash College, October 1, 1896.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- Ad.:** *Adelphi* (Terence).
Aen.: *Aeneid* (Vergil).
Agam.: *Agamemnon* (Seneca).
Ann.: *Annales* (Tacitus).
A. P.: *Ars Poetica* (Horace).
Arg.: *Argonautica* (Apollonius Rhodius).
art., artt.: article, articles.
Aul.: *Aulularia* (Plautus).
Brev. Vitae: *de Brevitate Vitae* (Seneca).
C., Carm.: *Carmina* (Horace, Tibullus, etc.).
cf.: confer, compare.
Cl. Dict.: *Classical Dictionary*.
C. S.: *Carmen Saeculare* (Horace).
Ecl.: *Eclogae* (Vergil).
Epig.: *Epigrams* (Seneca, Martial).
Epist.: *Epistles* (Cicero, Horace, Pliny, Seneca).
Epod.: *Epodes* (Horace).
Eur.: *Euripides*.
Fab.: *Fabulae* (Hyginus).
Georg.: *Georgics* (Vergil).
Ger.: *Germania* (Tacitus).
Herc. Fur.: *Hercules Furens* (Seneca).
Herc. Oet.: *Hercules Oetaeus* (Seneca).
Il.: *Iliad* (Homer).
Inst. Orat., I. O.: *Institutio Oratoria* (Quintilian).
lit.: literally.
Med.: *Medea* (Seneca, Euripides).
Met.: *Metamorphoses* (Ovid).
Mil. Glor.: *Miles Gloriosus* (Plautus).
N. D.: *de Natura Deorum* (Cicero).
N. H.: *Naturalis Historia* (Pliny).
Oct.: *Octavia* (Seneca).
Od.: *Odyssey* (Homer).
Oed.: *Oedipus* (Seneca).
Phaed.: *Phaedra* (Seneca).
Prov.: *de Providentia* (Seneca).
Rem. Amoris: *Remedium Amoris* (Ovid).
R. N.: *de Rerum Natura* (Lucretius).
S., Sat.: *Saturae* (Horace, Juvenal).
sc.: scilicet, understand, supply.
Sen.: Seneca.
Theb.: *Thebais* (Statius).
Thy.: *Thyestes* (Seneca).
Tr., Trist.: *Tristia* (Ovid).
Tranq. An.: *de Tranquillitate Animi* (Seneca).

INTRODUCTION

FROM LIVIUS TO ACCIUS

For five centuries Rome had no literature. Then, about 240 B. C., Livius Andronicus, who had been a slave and now was a schoolmaster, being in want of a good Latin text-book, translated the *Odyssey* of Homer into rude Saturnian verse. Finding this first essay successful he widened the scope of his adventure, and brought over some comedies and later some tragedies from the Greek. His success as tested by the popularity of his work was unquestioned, and, though little can be said for the originality or literary merit of his productions, it is from this beginning that the history of Roman literature dates.

The example thus set was not long in being followed. A host of translators and adapters sprang up, treading for the most part the comparatively narrow path marked out by the pioneer. Practice, under the spur of emulation, produced a gradual improvement in form and finish, and soon one and another ventured to introduce new features. Instead of translation, bald or free, came the interpolation of incidents and dialogue not in the original, the welding together of two plots (*contaminatio*), the introduction of bits of local coloring which served to render the scenes more intelligible to the untraveled Roman. Especially was this true of the Comedy, as is seen in the plays. still extant, of Plautus and Terence.

We have to do, however, mainly with tragedy. In this branch of the drama the earliest names we meet after Livius are those of Nævius, Ennius and Pacuvius, all of whom were living within a quarter-century after the enterprising schoolman had made his debut as an author. All borrowed freely from the Greek, as he had done. Presently, however, the Roman's national pride suggested an attempt at a national drama, whose result is seen in the *fabulæ præ-textæ* of Nævius and his successors. In these, while the form of the Greek play was retained, both plot and characters were purely Roman. Such titles are met as the *Romulus* of Nævius, the *Paullus* of Pacuvius, the *Brutus* and *Aeneas* of Accius, etc.

Unfortunately we have of these earliest products of the Roman tragic muse nothing more than a list of titles and a few of the merest fragments—too little data for the formation of any independent judgment of their merits. For this we must rely on the authority of ancient critics who had access to the plays in their entirety. Cicero constantly professed a great admiration for Ennius, though rather as an epic than as a tragic poet. Varro is quoted as having declared Pacuvius a model of richness in diction. To Pacuvius and Accius Quintilian ascribes the first place among ancient tragic writers in vigor of thought and expression and in the dignity of the characters they created. The popularity enjoyed in the Augustan age by these old authors provoked the sarcastic protest of Horace (see especially *Epist.* 2, 1, 18-75). Roman critics generally admitted the courage and vigor of these pioneers in literature, while at the same time they deplored the rudeness of their style: but this, Quintilian observes, was due less to themselves than to their age.

DECLINE OF THE TRAGEDY AT ROME

The interest in tragedy was soon overshadowed by the growing popularity of the comedy. For some reason the lighter form of drama appealed more powerfully to the Ro-

man taste, and while the comedies of Plautus and Terence were still popular in the time of Augustus, the custom of presenting tragedies on the stage very soon died out. A natural consequence was the diversion of literary effort into other channels, and in the half-century following the death of Accius there was but one tragic writer of any note—L. Julius Cæsar Strabo. After Accius, indeed, it is probable that works of this sort were composed rather as literary experiments, and for private reading or at most for declamation, than for exhibition on the stage. Many of the later poets tried their hands at this species of composition—among them Q. Cicero, Varro, Varius; Asinius Pollio, Ovid, Pomponius Secundus and Seneca—some with considerable success, if we accept the judgment of Quintilian (*I. O.* 10, 1, 98). In all we find mention made of thirty-six Roman poets who wrought or dabbled in this field, and the number of their works mounts up to about one hundred and fifty.

THE TEN TRAGEDIES OF SENECA

Of all this mass of tragic literature we have to-day, aside from inconsiderable fragments, only the ten plays (one of them incomplete) which bear the name of Seneca. Nine of the ten are adaptations from the Greek, while one is a *prætexta*. Fortunately most of the Greek originals are extant, so that comparison with them is possible—an advantage we do not enjoy in studying the Latin comedy. Thus we find that the *Agamemnon* was borrowed from Aeschylus, the *Oedipus* from Sophocles, and no less than five of the others—the *Medea*, the *Hippolytus* or *Phædra*, the *Hercules Furens*, the *Troades* or *Hecuba* and the *Phænissæ*—from Euripides. It is worthy of note that from the first it was not the solemn, stately and mysterious idealism of Aeschylus and Sophocles but the human realism of Euripides that most attracted the Romans. From the time of Ennius down it was Euripides who was copied oftenest, and Seneca in this is but following fixed precedent.

The nine plays now under consideration vary in length from the 1012 verses of the *Agamemnon* to the 1996 of the *Hercules Oetaeus*; and in quality from the *Oedipus*, which presents many crudities, to the *Medea* and the *Hercules Furens*, which last has been declared by some critics to surpass the work of Euripides. In most cases the characters bear the same names as in the Greek originals, and in essential features are the same; though they often differ in points of detail and in some cases are inferior in distinctness of conception and consistency of development. In plot the Roman author has not ventured to vary far from his models, though here and there he has altered the arrangement as well as the allotment of space to the several scenes. As a rule the Latin plays are considerably shorter than their Greek prototypes. New characters are never introduced, but quite frequently one or another is omitted.

The chorus is retained as in the Greek, although, since the orchestral pit was occupied in the Roman theater by seats for the senators, there was no space provided for the choral dance. In early times the chorus may have had a place on the stage, and its retention in tragic composition after public representation ceased was due probably to the fact that its presence in such pieces was traditional and to the opportunity thus afforded for experiment in lyric passages. Horace's precept, *Actoris partes chorus..defendat*, can hardly be said to have been observed in these plays. There is little of that direct participation in the development of the plot which is assigned the chorus by the Greeks and especially by Aeschylus. Its part here is more formal and artificial—rather a set passage on some lyric theme suggested more or less remotely by the context than an integral part of the whole. In this as in the handling of characters our author carries to an extreme an innovation of Euripides.

What has been said of the choruses is illustrated well in the *Medea*. The first, following the heroine's first savage

outburst of rage at being supplanted, is the *hymeneus* or wedding-song of Jason and Creusa; the second, after Medea's interview with Creon, deals with the rather irrelevant theme of the conquest of the sea; the third, which follows the meeting of Medea with her recreant husband and her declaration that she will have vengeance, opens appropriately by picturing the terrors of a woman's fury, then reviews the fate of the several Argonauts and prays that Jason may be spared; while the fourth and last formal chorus, more in the original manner, describes the frenzy of Medea and prays for the speedy coming of night, when her power to harm will be gone.

The *Octavia* is constructed on the same general plan as the other nine tragedies, having its dialogue and its choruses, but differing, of course, in plot and scene, and presenting also some peculiarities of versification.

While the Senecan tragedies are not arranged in trilogies, there are some pairs—bilogies, if we may coin the word—in which both plays contain the same principal characters and treat of their fortunes progressively. These are (1) the *Oedipus* and the *Phænissæ* or *Thebais*, in which the downfall and exile of the hapless Theban king are portrayed; (2) the *Thyestes* and the *Agamemnon*, whose theme is the house of Pelops and its dark destiny; and (3) the two plays in which the hero Hercules overshadows all other characters—the *Hercules Furens* and the *Hercules Oetaus*. The remaining plays are unconnected—the *Hippolytus* or *Phædra*, whose double title suggests its plot; the *Troades* or *Hecuba*, dealing with the fortunes of the royal house after the fall of Troy; and the *Medea*.

THE MEDEA

This play, whose authenticity is most nearly assured, is admitted to be one of the best of the group. Title, plot and characters are borrowed from Euripides. In both authors the scene is Corinth and the time that of the heroine's

repudiation and revenge--the last day of her stay on the Isthmus. In both are scenes in which she protests to King Creon against the injustice of her banishment and gains from him the respite of a single day; in which she seeks a final interview with Jason, upbraids him with his faithlessness and listens with scorn to his excuses; and in which, having slain her two sons, she is borne away through the air in a chariot drawn by dragons. In both she endeavors at first to recall her recreant husband to his duty, and, failing in that, dissembles her wrath but begins at once to plan her revenge.

Along with these points of resemblance are many minor differences. Of the *dramatis personæ* Seneca omits entirely the *paedagogos* and Aegeus, king of Athens, and makes the two boys, who in the Greek play cry out behind the scenes when attacked by their mother, purely mute characters. The messenger who reports the catastrophe at the palace also has a less important part, speaking but ten lines in Seneca as against 103 in Euripides. Medea's long address to the chorus, setting forth her woes and her vengeful design, and the promise of silence on the part of the chorus (EUR. 216-272), are omitted from the Latin play. So, of course, is the interview with Aegeus (EUR. 661-761). Other omissions of less extent occur, and in their stead is inserted the scene (SEN. 670-848) in which Medea's incantations are recorded at length. The introduction of the *hymenæus* as one of the choruses is an innovation of the Latin author. In matters of detail we find still further variations. Thus in Euripides Medea is commanded (v. 275) to take her children with her into exile, and with pretended earnestness entreats her husband to obtain a revocation of the edict (vv. 935-939); while in Seneca it is she who desires them to go with her, and her husband who insists that they remain. In the Greek she is determined to destroy her husband as well as her rival (vv. 364-376), but does not form the design until later (v. 787 ff.) of striking at him through their sons:

yet in the very first scene the nurse is represented as fearful of danger to the children from the mother's frenzy. Neither of these ideas appears in the Latin. In the older play Jason is told of the intended gift to his bride, while in the newer he knows nothing of it until it has done its deadly work. In both versions the heroine is by far the strongest character, but she overshadows the rest more completely in the Latin. Jason in the one play (EUR. 593-597) affirms that his purpose in wedding the Corinthian princess is to gain means of protection and support for Medea and her children; in the other (SEN. 434-436, 518-530) he frankly confesses that fear is his motive. In the one case he is a smooth-tongued egoist, in the other a self-confessed coward. In both (EUR. 476-487; SEN. 449-489) she reminds him of all she has done and sacrificed in his behalf, and paints his ingratitude in vivid colors. The passages are very similar in substance, though the Greek is a straightforward narrative and the Latin more declamatory. Jason's reply is reported differently. According to Euripides he proceeds to prove by argument (*vv.* 534-541) that her service to him had not been so great after all, and that in fact she had gained more than she had lost in following him, while in the Latin (*vv.* 490, 491) he tries to evade her claims by setting up the pitiful counter-plea that by his tears he had persuaded Creon to grant her exile instead of death. Her reply is scathing in its irony: *Pœnam putabam: munus ut video est fuga* (*v.* 492). Euripides makes them meet a second time, Seneca but once.

The existence of such differences has prompted the suggestion that perhaps Seneca did not imitate Euripides directly, but rather some later (perhaps Alexandrian) version of the play. Of course the myth of Medea was common property. Before Euripides there had been the *Medea* of Neophron, and as many as five other Greek tragedies of the same name are catalogued. Among the Romans too it was a favorite theme. Ennius had used it; so probably had

Mæcenas; Ovid's *Medea* had won high praise from Quintilian and from Tacitus (*Dial.* 12). It is probable, therefore, that our author had access to several Latin versions of the *Medea*, as well as to more than one in Greek. Nor is it unlikely that his conception and treatment of it were affected by Ovid's facile brilliancy. There is a striking parallel between the two authors in methods and results. Each wrote much and easily, and each appeared to care mainly for effectiveness of form and to be willing, if need be, to attain this at the sacrifice of substance. While we have not Ovid's tragedy, we have his epistle of *Medea* to Jason (*Heroides* 12), from which we may infer something of his conception of the heroine. Now there are unmistakable points of resemblance between the *Medea* of this epistle and the *Medea* of Seneca's tragedy, and moreover there are many expressions essentially and some literally the same. It would be hard to avoid the conclusion, therefore, that the Neronian author was influenced to a considerable degree by the Augustan, and that some of the variations from Euripides may be accounted for in this way.

In modern times the tragedy of *Medea* has appeared in Italian and French, and even in German and English.

THE METRES OF THE MEDEA

Seneca forms the iambic senarius with great regularity. In the *Medea* the rules are followed with especial strictness. For the characteristic iambus (—), the equivalent tribrach (—) may be substituted, except in the first and last feet. In the last not infrequently a pyrrhic (—) occurs, the final syllable being common. The substitution of a spondee (—) or either of its equivalents, the dactyl (—) or the anapest (—), is common in the odd-numbered feet (first, third and fifth), but does not occur in the sixth as it might do in accordance with the license allowed (cf. Horace, *A. P.* 255-257). The scheme of the

senarius, with the variations allowed in the *Medea*, is as follows:

1	2	3	4	5	6
— —	— —	— —	— —	2 — —	— —
— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —	
— —		— —		— — —	
— — —	— — —	— — —		— — —	
— — —		— — —			— —

The fifth foot is almost invariably a spondee or an anapest.

In the several choruses and cantica are met a great variety of metres. The first chorus (*vv.* 56-115), though but sixty lines in length, changes measure three times. First is a passage of nineteen lines in the minor asclepiadean (as in Horace, *C.* 1, 1, etc.), then eighteen glyconics, then seventeen more asclepiadean verses, and finally six dactylic hexameters. There is nothing particularly noticeable in these measures (except the use of so many glyconics together), as they do not differ in structure from the same as written by Horace.

It is in the second chorus (*vv.* 301-379) that we meet Seneca's favorite choral measure, the anapestic dimeter. Certain peculiarities mark its use here. The standard foot may give way to a spondee and this (except in the fourth foot) to a dactyl. The single lines are not regarded as independent, but as parts of a continuous whole. Thus the final syllable may not be long or short at will as in the iambs, but must be always long (not so, however, in the *Octavia*); and, contrary to the usual rule in Latin poetry, a final consonant in one line "makes position" with an initial consonant in the next. Hiatus between successive verses, which the Greeks never allowed in this measure, is admitted by Sen-

eca. In this play there are five instances (following vv. 342, 348, 827, 828, 882). One of these is a half-verse, and in two instances the hiatus is at the end of a period.

The longest chorus proper is at the end of the third act (vv. 579-669), and is a form of the sapphic strophe. A break occurs at v. 669, where the measure can be restored by supplying one hemistich, though the sense may require an additional stanza. Taking the chorus as it stands in Leo's text (supplying, of course, the half-line in v. 660), we count fourteen stanzas or strophes, seven of four lines each, as in Horace, and seven of nine lines each, the last of each strophe being an adonic.

The brief chorus which closes the fourth act (vv. 849-878) is composed of twenty-seven anacreontics (iambic dimeter catalectic) and three verses one syllable less (iambic dimeter brachycatalectic), which has been called sometimes eupolidean. It is rigid in its construction, the only variation from the iambus being the use of a spondee and in three cases an anapest in the first foot. The final syllable with a single exception (v. 852) is long, either by nature or by position (often on account of an initial consonant in the following line).

The frenzied speech of Medea in vv. 740-848, while not nominally a chorus, presents all the characteristics of one, metrically and sentimentally. Verses 740-751 are in the trochaic tetrameter catalectic. Then follow nineteen lines (752-770) in the iambic trimeter, then sixteen in which the iambic trimeter and the iambic dimeter alternate (771-786), and finally fifty-six lines in the anapestic dimeter, but with three monometers (811, 816, 832) interspersed (see note on v. 740). The last six verses of the speech do not belong properly to the *canticum*, but are a reversion to the ordinary dramatic form.

Altogether the *Medea* contains 344 verses in other measures than the iambic senarius out of a total of 1028 verses

—almost exactly one-third—certainly not an undue proportion when we consider the intensity of the passions in play and their tendency toward expression in more irregular measures.

AUTHORSHIP OF THE SENECA TRAGEDIES

While all the manuscripts ascribe these plays to "Seneca," the diversity of *prænomina*, with other circumstances, leaves room for the creation of a "Senecan question" which critics have not been slow to occupy. The several theories advanced are (1) that the plays are the work of the well-known philosopher; (2) that some are his and the remainder from another hand—or other hands; (3) that all are the result of collaboration by Marcus and Lucius Seneca, the latter's brother Mela and the poet Lucan; and (4) that all are the work of an entirely different person, whose real or assumed name was Seneca.

In support of the last hypothesis are quoted certain lines written in the fifth century by Sidonius Apollinaris, who says of the Senecas (*Carm.* 9, 229-231):

*Quorum unus colit hispidum Platona
incassumque suum monet Neronem,
orchestram quatit alter Euripidis.*

Here the distinction is made clearly between the philosopher and the tragic poet. In the absence, however, of corroborative witness it has been supposed that the writer misunderstood and wrongly amplified the statement of Martial (*Epig.* 1, 62, 7, 8):

*Duosque Senecas unicumque. Lucanum
facunda loquitur Corduba.*

But it seems clear that Martial meant by this to designate the two well-known Senecas, Marcus and Lucius, father and son, rhetorician and philosopher—and not the latter and some third Seneca who to us is otherwise unknown. On the whole the assumption of a separate Seneca *tragicus*

appears to rest on a very slender support of evidence.

The second hypothesis, that some of the plays are Seneca's and some not, has been upheld vigorously and ably. It may be said now to be pretty generally admitted that seven of the nine are genuine, while some critics question the authenticity of the *Agamemnon* and the *Hercules Oetaeus* on the score of internal evidence. Regarding even these, however, the preponderance of opinion is in favor of Seneca's authorship.

The idea that the tragedies are the joint production of the three Senecas and their nephew Lucan is merely an ingenious conjecture of a modern French critic, and has not found any wide acceptance.

There remains the theory that the nine plays borrowed from the Greek are the work of Seneca the philosopher. External evidence is scant and fragmentary. We have the tradition that assigns them to him, and the appearance of his name in the manuscripts—in one, however, with the double *prænomen* M. L. Tacitus (*Ann.* 14, 52) speaks of his devotion to the writing of poetry—*carmina crebrius facititare*--after the death of his comrade Burrhus, and the younger Pliny (*Epist.* 5, 3, 5) calls him a poet, in defending his own verse-writing. Quintilian (*I. O.* 10, 1, 129) says: "(Seneca) has wrought in almost every field of learning; for we have orations of his, and poems, letters and dialogues." It is questioned if the great critic would have used the word *poemata* to designate the few brief epigrams which, with the *Apocolocyntosis*, constitute the only other verse of Seneca of which we know. But a much stronger bit of evidence is the quotation by this same Quintilian (*I. O.* 9, 2, 8) of a sentence from the *Medea* as we now have it—*Quas peti terras iubes?* (v. 453)—which he introduces with the phrase, "As Medea says in Seneca." This is taken almost universally as settling the authorship of the *Medea*. Four other plays, moreover (*Phædra*, *Troades*, *Thyestes* and *Oedipus*), are quoted by well-known writers who

lived within five centuries of the philosopher's death, and ascribed in each case to Seneca.

Of the internal evidence on this point we can notice here only the general character. Allusion to contemporary events is almost precluded, of course, by the nature of the themes, yet it does seem probable that Agrippina's exclamation to the assassins sent by her son—*Ventrem feri* (see Tacitus, *Ann.* 14, 8)—suggested the very similar expression placed in the mouth of Jocasta—*Hunc peti uterum* (*Oed.* 1038). The thought is amplified in the *Octavia* (vv. 363–372) where Agrippina's death is described. The incident at Bauli must have made a deep impression on Seneca's mind, and would be likely to recur to him when describing Jocasta's grief and despair.

This, however, is exceptional. The evidence has to do mainly with (1) the philosophy and general tone of thought and sentiment pervading all the works of Seneca, and (2) the style of expression. In philosophy Seneca was essentially a Stoic. He did not believe, like the Epicurean Lucretius, that the universe is an accident and the gods are merely lookers on; on the contrary he teaches directly the doctrines of providence and fate. In essays and letters he sets forth the Stoic ideas of virtue and wisdom and the nearness of the wise man to godhood. His *de Tranquillitate Animi* dwells upon the thought that death is a welcome release from trouble and is ever within our reach. All these ideas are met also in the tragedies. A most close and striking parallel exists between one passage in the essay *de Providentia* (5, 5) and a chorus in the *Oedipus* (vv. 980–994), where the inevitableness of fate and man's helplessness before it are expressed in as nearly the same phraseology as the differences of prose and verse will admit. The phrase *Lex est, non pœna, perire* (*Epig.* 7, 7) has its counterpart in thought and form in the *Non est pœna sic nato mori* of the *Agamemnon* (v. 233). Two other expressions of a kindred idea are, *Male vivet quisquis nesciet bene mori*

(*Tranq. An.* 11, 3), and *O quam miserum nescire mori* (*Agam.* 611). Another thought on which the philosopher dwells in his prose works is the fickleness of fortune, the instability of high station (cf. *Brer. Vita* 17, 4; *ad Polyb. de Cons.* 9, 4; etc.), and this too is a favorite theme of the choruses in the tragedies (e. g., *Agam.* 57-107; *Oed.* 882-910; *Phæd.* 1123-1143; cf. *Oct.* 337-390, where Seneca himself is made to regret the safe leisure and obscurity of his exile).

Such examples may be multiplied indefinitely—indeed the comparison has been carried very far by Nisard—with striking results; and the further the study is pursued the greater will be the difficulty in accounting for such parallelism in thought and even phrase except on the supposition that both sets of works are the product of one mind—or of unconscionable plagiarism.

The qualities of style are too subtle and elusive to be illustrated satisfactorily in a brief introduction. Only generalizations can be given. Seneca had a most impressive manner in uttering trifles. He was always trying to turn an epigram. In these his essays and letters abound, and the tone of the tragedies is the same. Often he utters mere platitudes, but does it as imposingly as if they were proverbs. The tone is unmistakable, and it pervades his prose and verse alike. Read epistle 23, then *de Brevitate Viæ*, then *de Providentia*, then Jason's interview with *Meæa* (*Med.* 437 ff.) and Creon's with Oedipus (*Oed.* 685 ff.), for a convincing illustration of this identity of style.

If we consider, then, the mention of Seneca as a poet by Quintilian, Pliny and Tacitus, the citation of the *Medea* by Quintilian, the ascription to Seneca of other plays by critics in the following centuries, the absence of proof that a separate writer of tragedies existed, and the marked resemblance in sentiment and style between the plays and Seneca's acknowledged works, and to this add the fact that

they have survived under his name and have been commonly assumed to be his, we find no great difficulty in concluding that the philosopher and the tragic writer are one.

The case of the *Octavia* is different. Its omission from the oldest manuscript, the fact that the philosopher himself is one of the *dramatis personæ*, the remarkable forecasting of the fate (*vv.* 629–631) which befell Nero three years after Seneca's death, and certain peculiarities of style and metre, all have been cited as going to prove a later origin; and while none of these arguments is conclusive in itself, their cumulative force is considerable. Various dates have been assigned for its composition, as early as Domitian's reign and as late as Hadrian's or later, but no definite conclusion can be reached. Historically the *Octavia* agrees almost perfectly with Tacitus. It is of especial interest to us as the one example extant of the *fabula prætecta*.

SENECA'S LIFE

Like so many other literary men of that age (e. g., M. Seneca, Lucan, Martial, Quintilian), L. Annaeus Seneca was a native of Spain. Born at Corduba (Cordova) about the beginning of our era, he was brought to Rome at an early age and received a liberal education. His taste led him to the study of philosophy, and he seems to have tasted the theories of all the schools. Sotion the Alexandrian (*Epist.* 108, 17–20) inspired in him a great admiration of Pythagoras and his doctrines; but later he received a deeper and more lasting impression from association with his instructor Attalus the Stoic (frequently mentioned in the letters—e. g., *Epist.* 9, 7; 63, 5; 67, 15; 72, 8; 108, 13–15; 110, 14–20, etc.), and his own philosophy, so far as it can be assigned to any school, is Stoic.

Under his father's advice the young Seneca entered public life as an advocate. Soon, however, the success of his pleadings was such as to arouse the jealousy of the emperor Caligula, and he wisely retired to private life.

Other perils awaited him. Claudius mounted the throne in A. D. 41, and almost immediately was led by his wife, Messalina to order Seneca's banishment to Corsica. There he solaced his grief and discontent by study and literary effort. It was at this time that the epigrams were written, as well as two treatises "on consolation," one addressed to his friend Polybius and the other to his mother Helvia. Probably, too, the *Medea* was written there.

On Messalina's fall in A. D. 49 her successor Agrippina procured Seneca's recall and made him tutor to her son L. Domitius, afterward the emperor Nero. The following five years were comparatively uneventful for Seneca, but were marked by the gradual development of Agrippina's ambitious plans. She brought about her son's adoption by the emperor and his marriage with Octavia, Claudius' daughter; and on the emperor's death (A. D. 54) her prompt action secured the recognition of Nero as his successor.

From this time on the life of Seneca was linked inseparably with the history of Nero and his reign. As secretary of the young monarch he composed the eulogy on Claudius which Nero delivered in the senate, and shortly afterward gave forth the *Apocolocyntosis*, a bitter satire on the dead emperor. He is thought also to have prepared most of the state papers during the early part of Nero's reign.

During the first five years of his reign the young prince was almost wholly under the influence of his counselors Burrhus and Seneca, and governed with such wisdom and moderation that the *quinquennium Neronis* was long remembered for its peace and happiness. Agrippina, however, whose courage and determination had advanced her son to his high station, felt that she was entitled to a controlling voice in affairs, and soon came into conflict with his more politic advisers. Enraged at being thwarted in her plans, she began to utter threats of displacing Nero with the true heir, Britannicus; and this led to the first act in the career of crime that rendered the name of Nero

infamous. Feeling that he could not be safe while Britannicus lived, Nero had him taken off by poison (A. D. 55). Then he began to treat his wife Octavia with coldness and cruelty. In time his mistress Acte was displaced by Poppæa Sabina, who soon aspired to be the lawful wife of the emperor. Agrippina stood in the way of this design, and she in turn was assassinated (A. D. 59). It was not until three years later that the plan was consummated by the divorce of Octavia and the marriage of Nero and Poppæa (A. D. 62). In June of that year the unhappy Octavia was banished to the island Pandataria, and shortly after murdered.

Seneca, meantime, had maintained his position amid increasing difficulties. He saw but dared not vigorously oppose the growing depravity of his ward. He stood in the way of Agrippina's ambitious schemes, of course, but it scarcely be believed that he advocated her death; though he probably wrote the dispatches (Quintilian, *I. O.* 8, 5, 18) in which Nero reported the affair to the senate, and Tacitus (*Ann.* 14, 11) says that he incurred the hatred of the people by his attempt to gloss over so unnatural a deed.

In A. D. 62 Seneca's friend and fellow-counselor Burrhus died, and thenceforth his own influence rapidly waned. Very soon he begged permission to go into retirement. For three years more he lived, a mere spectator of events, employing his enforced leisure in writing, as he had done in Corsica. At length the blow fell. He was accused of complicity in the plot of Piso (A. D. 65), and without trial was commanded to die. The story of his calm fortitude on that occasion is too familiar to require repetition.

Seneca has been criticised severely, both as man and as author. He has been accused of insincerity and inconsistency in his life and of empty verbosity in his writings. It certainly is unfortunate for his fame that he lived under such conditions. Inheriting wealth and rising early into prominence, he could know the sweets of poverty, of which

he wrote so glibly, only by theory and observation, not by experience. His learning and ability cannot be questioned, and the range and variety of his works prove his industry as an author. His philosophy, in spite of some inconsistencies, is pure and elevated, and his views of morality and the relation of man to his Maker are so nearly Christian as to have caused the belief in early times that he had known and been influenced by the apostle Paul, whose first imprisonment in Rome occurred in Seneca's lifetime. It was his misfortune that his relations with Nero (well expressed by the ancient cartoon representing a butterfly driving a dragon) were such as to render his practice of these principles so difficult. We cannot acquit him of weakness in yielding to the force of circumstances, yet we dare not be too harsh in our judgment, for who of us could or would have done better in his place?

In regard to word-forms and syntax the Latin of Seneca is essentially that of the Golden Age. In his prose he uses constructions which earlier were admissible only in poetry, and gives this word and that a somewhat different shade of meaning, but in the main the mastery of Cicero, Vergil and Ovid gives one the key to Seneca's grammar. It was in his rhetoric that he created a new school. Ovid had made a start, but Seneca went much further. Form became the essential thing. An affectation of brevity, a straining after antithesis and epigram, came to be the characteristics of his work and that of his imitators (see Quintilian's judgment, *I. O.* 10, 1, 129). In spite, however, of undeniable faults of style, there is much that is good and more that is pleasing, and no study of the literature of Rome can afford to leave Seneca out of consideration.

THE WORKS OF SENECA

As was remarked by Quintilian (*I. O.* 10, 1, 129), Seneca was a very prolific writer, and wrought in almost every department of literature. Of the prose works there are

twelve which in the Milan ms. are called *dialogi*, because of the interruption of the discourse here and there by a second speaker with a question or a remark (a custom followed also by Cicero). These are: (1) *De Providentia*, a short essay dedicated to Lucilius and intended to show that the misfortunes of good men are not inconsistent with the rule of providence. (2) *De Constantia Sapientis*, addressed to Serenus, and arguing that a truly wise man rises superior to any injury or insult. (3-5) *De Ira*, a more extended work in three books, dedicated to Novatus, discussing the nature and the necessity of controlling wrath. (6) *De Consolatione ad Marciam*, the first of three short treatises of this nature, addressed to friends. (7) *De Vita Beata*, addressed to his brother, who had been adopted into the family and assumed the name of Gallio (probably the same referred to in *Acts* 18, 12-17). The burden of his song is that virtue is essential while good health and money are merely accessory to happiness. The conclusion is missing. (8) *De Otio*, a mere fragment of which remains, addressed to Serenus. (9) *De Tranquillitate Animi*, also addressed to Serenus, in a tone which suggests that the author is setting forth a theory rather than his own experience. (10) *De Brevitate Vitæ*, addressed to Paulinus. Its keynote is in the words (1, 3): *Non exiguum temporis habemus, sed multum perdidimus. Satis longa vita... si tota bene collocaretur.* (11) *De Consolatione ad Polybium*, a portion of which is lost, addressed to a courtier of Claudius on the death of his brother. From its tone it has been thought that the author hoped by flattering the emperor to effect his recall from banishment. (12) *Ad Helviam Matrem de Consolatione*, an attempt to console his mother for the separation caused by his exile. One of the noblest of his works.

The other prose works still extant are: (a) Two books *de Clementia*, addressed to Nero and praising his mild government, possibly in the hope of forestalling the cruel tendencies which had begun already to manifest themselves in

his character. The second book is incomplete. (b) An extended work entitled *de Beneficiis*, in seven books, addressed to Aebutius Liberalis. It is a discussion of the obligations involved in bestowing or receiving gifts or kindly services. (c) *Naturales Quaestiones*, in seven books, the product less of original investigation than of compilation. It is addressed to Lucilius, and discusses various natural phenomena, astronomical, meteorological, etc. Breaks occur here and there in the text. This was used as a text-book in the middle ages. (d) *Epistulae Morales*, rather short philosophical tracts than letters in our sense of the word. They number 124, and are addressed one and all to Lucilius. (e) There is also a collection of short letters, indorsed as authentic by St. Jerome, but usually regarded as counterfeit, which purport to have passed between Seneca and the apostle Paul (eight written by Seneca, six by Paul).

Altogether the prose works of Seneca, counting only those which are admitted to be genuine, cover more than a thousand closely printed pages in the Teubner text edition. From fragments, moreover, and citations in later writers, we know that he wrote extensively in the fields of science, philosophy and history, in addition to the works which have been preserved. Mention has been made also of letters addressed to Novatus, and it is well known that he composed many speeches and papers for Nero. His literary activity, therefore, must have been very considerable.

The *Apocolocyntosis*, partly in prose, partly in verse, is the only example known to be extant of the *Satura Menippea*. Its theme is the search of the lately deceased emperor Claudius for his proper place in the other world, and while it displays a good deal of ingenuity and talent of a certain order, its flippancy and irreverence make it distasteful to the modern reader.

The purely poetical works ascribed to Seneca are the nine epigrams and the ten tragedies already discussed. All dis-

play a good ability in the use of metrical forms, without, however, a high endowment of poetic genius.

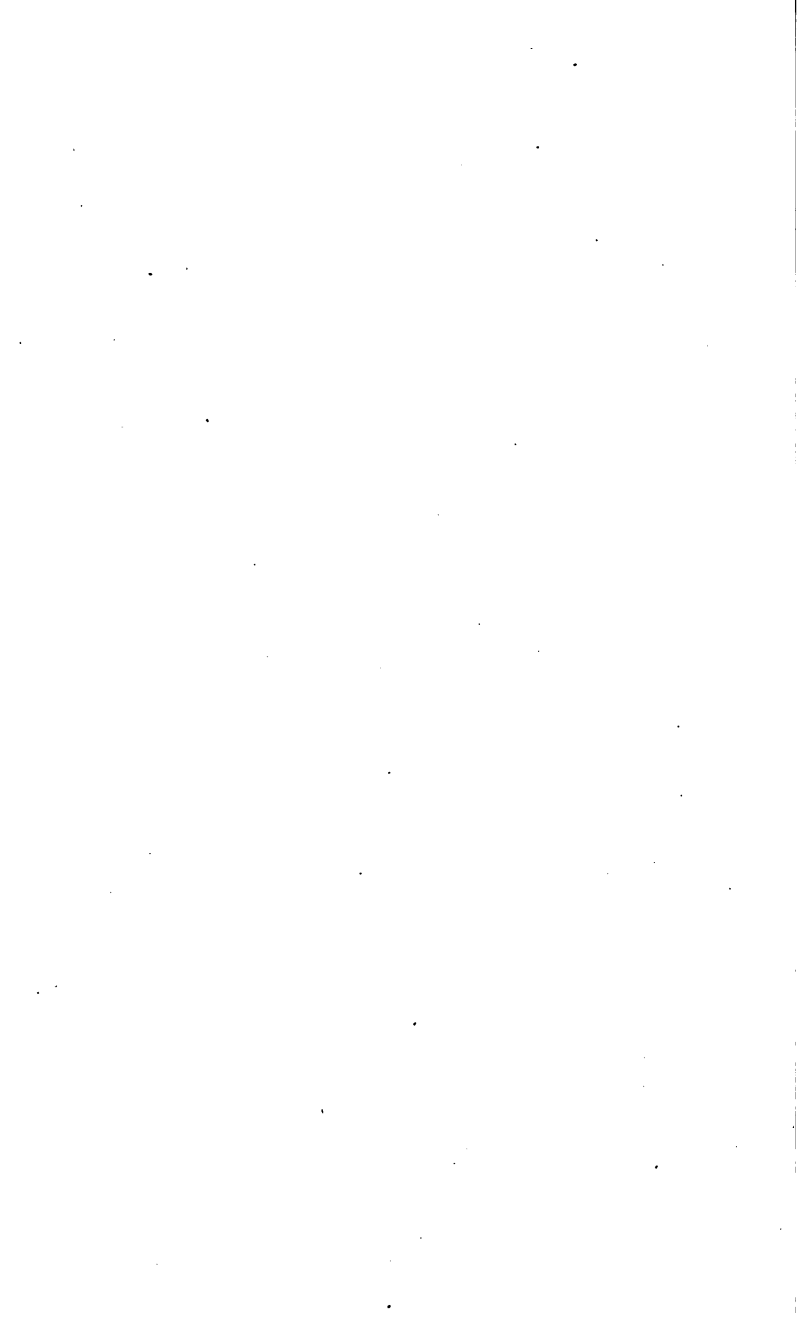
The approximate order of composition has been placed as follows: Before A. D. 41, the *Consolatio ad Marciam*; during the period of exile (41-49), some of the tragedies (including possibly the *Medea*), the epigrams and the two treatises on consolation, *ad Polybium* and *ad Helviam*; within the next five years (49-54), dialogues 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10; within the eight years following (54-62), the *de Clementia*, *de Beneficiis*, dialogues 2 and 7, and the *Apocolocyntosis*; and in the last three years of his life dialogues 1 and 8, the *Naturales Questiones* and the Epistles. The remaining tragedies were composed at uncertain intervals. If the *Octavia* be Seneca's, it must have been composed after A. D. 62, of course.

MANUSCRIPTS

The manuscripts of the Senecan tragedies are grouped in two general classes. The first of these includes the *codex Etruscus* (called also *Florentinus*, *Laurentianus*, and *Medicens*), the oldest complete copy (which, however, does not contain the *Octavia*), dating from the eleventh or the twelfth century; the *Ambrosianus* (D 276) and the *Vaticanus* (lat. 1769), both belonging to the fourteenth century and both containing the *Octavia*; and the fragments (*Ambrosiana*) of a much older copy, containing detached bits of the *Oedipus* and the *Medea* (of the latter *vv.* 196-274, 694-708, 722-744). The remains of the *codex Thyanens*, of the ninth or tenth century, have only fragmentary portions of three plays (of the *Medea* about ten verses between 579 and 594).

To the second class are referred a considerable number of copies, more or less corrupt, derived from a common archetype of unknown date. This is supposed to have been the work of a man of some learning, who did not hesitate to modify the text when it suited his convenience.

Of all the manuscripts the Etruscan is accepted as most authoritative.



MEDEA

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MEDEA
NUTRIX
CREO

IASON
NUNTIVS
CHORVS

SCAENA CORINTHI

MEDEA

Di coniugales tuque genialis tori,
Lucina, custos quæque domituram freta
Tiphyn novam frenare docuisti ratem,
et tu, profundi saeve dominator maris,
clarumque Titan dividens orbi diem,
tacitisque praebens conscium sacris iubar
Hecate triformis, quosque iuravit mihi
deos Iason, quosque Medae magis
fas est precari: noctis aeternae chaos,
aversa superis regna manesque impios
dominumque regni tristis et dominam fide
meliore raptam, voce non fausta precor.
nunc, nunc adeste, sceleris ultrices deae,

crinem solutis squalidae serpentibus,
 atram cruentis manibus amplexae facem, 15
 adeste, thalamis horridae quondam meis
 quales stetistis: coniungi letum novae
 letumque socero et regiae stirpi date.
 mihi peius aliquid, quod precer sponso, manet:
 vivat. per urbes erret ignotas egens 20
 exul pavens invisus incerti laris,
 iam notus hospes limen alienum expetat,
 me coniugem optet quoque non aliud queam
 peius precari, liberos similes patri
 similesque matri - parta iam, parta ultio est: 25
 peperit. querelas verbaque in cassum sero?
 non ibo in hostes? manibus excutiam faces
 caeloque lucem spectat hoc nostri sator
 sol generis, et spectatur, et curru insidens
 per solita puri spatia decurrit poli? 30
 non redit in ortus et remetitur diem?
 da, da per auras curribus patriis vehi,
 committe habenas, genitor, et flagrantibus
 ignifera loris tribue moderari iuga:
 gemino Corinthos litore opponens moras 35
 cremata flammis maria committat duo.
 hoc restat unum, pronubam thalamo feram
 ut ipsa pinum postque sacrificas preces
 caedam dicatis victimas altaribus.
 per viscera ipsa quaere supplicio viam, 40
 si vivis, anime, si quid antiqui tibi
 remanet vigoris; pelle femineos metus
 et inhospitalem Caucasum mente indue.
 quodcumque vidit Pontus aut Phasis nefas,
 videbit Isthmos. effera, ignota, horrida, 45
 tremenda caelo pariter ac terris mala
 mens intus agitat: vulnera et caedem et vagum
 funus per artus leviam memoravi nimis:
 haec virgo feci: gravior exurgat dolor:

maiora iam me scelera post partus decent. 50
 accingere ira teque in exitium para
 furore toto. paria narrentur tua
 repudia thalamis: quo virum linques modo?
 hoc quo secuta es. rumpe iam segnes moras:
 quae scelere parta est, scelere linquenda est domus. 55

CHORVS

Ad regum thalamos numine prospero
 qui caelum superi quique regunt fretum
 adsint cum populis rite faventibus.
 primum sceptriferis colla Tonantibus
 taurus celsa ferat tergore candido; 60
 Lucinam nivei femina corporis
 intemptata iugo placet, et asperi
 Martis sanguineas quae cohibet manus,
 quae dat belligeris foedera gentibus
 et cornu retinet divite copiam, 65
 donetur tenera mitior hostia.
 et tu, qui facibus legitimis ades,
 noctem discutiens auspice dextera
 huc incede gradu marcidus ebrio,
 praecingens roseo tempora vinculo. 70
 et tu quae, gemini praevia temporis,
 tarde, stella, redis semper amantibus:
 te matres, avide te cupiunt nurus
 quamprimum radios spargere lucidos.

Vincit virgineus decor 75
 longe Cecropias nurus,
 et quas Taygeti iugis
 exercet iuvenum modo
 muris quod caret oppidum,
 et quas Aonius latex 80
 Alpheosque sacer lavat.
 si forma velit aspici,

cedent Aesonio duci
 proles fulminis improbi
 aptat qui iuga tigribus, 85
 nec non, qui tripodas movet,
 frater virginis asperae,
 cedit Castore cum suo
 Pollux caestibus aptior.
 sic, sic, caelicolae, precor, 90
 vincat femina coniuges,
 vir longe superet viros.

Haec cum femineo constitit in choro.
 unius facies praenitet omnibus.
 sic cum sole perit sidereus decor, 95
 et densi latitant Pleiadum greges
 cum Phoebe solidum lumine non suo
 orbem circuitis cornibus alligat.

*

*

ostro sic niveus puniceo color
 perfusus rubuit, sic nitidum inbar 100
 pastor luce nova roscidus aspicit.
 ereptus thalamis Phasidis horridi.
 effrenae solitus pectora coniugis
 invita trepidus prendere dextera.
 felix Aeoliam corripe virginem 105
 nunc primum soceris, sponse, volentibus.
 concesso, iuvenes, ludite iurgio,
 hinc illinc, iuvenes, mittite carmina:
 rara est in dominos iusta licentia.

Candida thyrsigeri proles generosa Ilyaei. 110
 multifidam iam tempus erat succendere pinum:
 excute sollemnem digitis marcentibus ignem.
 festa dicax fundat convicia fescenninus,
 solvat turba iocos—tacitis eat illa tenebris.
 si qua peregrino nubit fugitiva marito. 115

MEDEA

Occidimus, aures pepulit hymenaeus meas.

vix ipsa tantum, vix adhuc credo malum.

hoc facere Iason potuit, erepto patre

patria atque regno sedibus solam exteris

deserere durus? merita contempsit mea 120

qui scelere flammās viderat vinci et mare?

adeone credit omne consumptum nefas?

incerta vaecors mente vaesana feror

partes in omnes; unde me ulcisci queam?

utinam esset illi frater! est coniunx: in hanc 125

ferrum exigatur. hoc meis satis est malis?

si quod Pelasgae, si quod urbes barbarae

novere facinus quod tuae ignorent manus,

nunc est parandum. scelera te hortentur tua

et cuncta redeant: inclitum regni decus 130

raptum et nefandae virginis parvus comes

divisus ense, funus ingestum patri

sparsumque ponto corpus et Peliae senis

decocta aeno membra: funestum impie

quam saepe fudi sanguinem, et nullum scelus 135

irata feci: movit infelix amor.

Quid tamen Iason potuit, alieni arbitri

iurisque factus? debuit ferro obvium

offerre pectus — melius, a melius, dolor

furiose, loquere. si potest, vivat meus, 140

ut fuit, Iason; si minus, vivat tamen

memorque nostri muneri parcat meo.

culpa est Creontis tota, qui sceptro impotens

coniugia solvit quique genetricem abstrahit

natis et arto pignore astrictam fidem 145

dirimit: petatur, solus hic poenas luat

quas debet. alto cinere cumulabo domum;

videbit atrum verticem flammis agi

Malea longas navibus flectens moras.

- NVTR. Sile, obsecro, questusque secreto abditos 150
 manda dolori. gravia quisquis vulnera
 patiente et aequo mutus animo pertulit,
 referre potuit: ira quae tegitur n̄det;
 professa perdunt odia vindictae locum.
- MED. Levis est dolor qui capere consilium potest 155
 et clepere sese: magna non latitant mala.
 libet ire contra. NVTR. Siste furialem impetum.
 alumna: vix te tacita defendit quies.
- MED. Fortuna fortes metuit, ignavos premit.
- NVTR. Tunc est probanda, si locum virtus habet. 160
- MED. Numquam potest non esse virtuti locus.
- NVTR. Spes nulla rebus monstrat afflictis viam.
- MED. Qui nil potest sperare, desperet nihil.
- NVTR. Abiere Colchi, coniugis nulla est fides
 nihilque superest opibus e tantis tibi. 165
- MED. Medea superest, hic mare et terras vides
 ferrumque et ignes et deos et fulmina.
- NVTR. Rex est timendus. MED. Rex meus fuerat pater.
- NVTR. Non metuis arma? MED. Sint licet terra edita.
- NVTR. Moriere. MED. Cupio. NVTR. Profuge. MED.
 Paenituit fugae. 170
- NVTR. Medea -- MED. Fiam. NVTR. Mater es. MED.
 Cui sim vides.
- NVTR. Profugere dubitas? MED. Fugiam, at ulciscar prius.
- NVTR. Vindex sequetur. MED. Forsan inveniam mores.
- NVTR. Compesce verba, parce iam, demens, minis
 animosque minue: tempori aptari decet. 175
- MED. Fortuna opes auferre, non animum potest.
 sed cuius ictu regius cardo strepit?
 ipse est Pelasgo tumidus imperio Creó.

CREO

Medea, Colchi noxium Aetæe genus,
 nondum meis exportat e regnis pedem? 180

molitur aliquid: nota fraus, nota est manus.

cui parcat illa quemve securum sinet?

abolere propere pessimam ferro luem

equidem parabam: precibus evicit gener.

concessa vita est, liberet fines metu

185

abeatque tuta. fert gradum contra ferox

minaxque nostros propius affatus petit.

arcete, famuli, tactu et accessu procul,

inbete sileat. regium imperium pati

aliquando discat. vade veloci fuga

190

monstrumque saevum horribile iamdudum avehe.

MED. Quod crimen aut quae culpa multatur fuga?

CR. Quae causa pellat, innocens mulier rogat.

MED. Si iudicas, cognosce. Si regnas, iube.

CR. Aequum atque iniquum regis imperium feras. 195

MED. Iniqua numquam regna perpetuo manent.

CR. I, querere Colehis. MED. Redeo: qui avexit, ferat.

CR. Vox constituto sera decreto venit.

MED. Qui statuit aliquid parte inaudita altera,

aequum licet statuerit, haud aequus fuit.

200

CR. Auditus a te Pelia supplicium tulit?

sed fare, causae detur egregiae locus.

MED. Difficile quam sit animum ab ira flectere

iam concitatum quamque regale hoc putet

sceptris superbas quisquis admovet manus,

205

qua coepit ire, regia didici mea.

quamvis enim sim glade miseranda obruta,

expulsa supplex sola deserta, undique

afflicta, quondam nobili fulsi patre

avoque clarum Sole deduxi genus.

210

quodcumque placidis flexibus Phasis rigat

Pontusque quidquid Scythicus a tergo videt,

palustribus qua maria dulcescunt aquis,

armata peltis quidquid exterret cohors

inclusa ripis vidua Thermodontiis,

215

hoc omne noster genitor imperio regit.

generosa, felix, decore regali potens
 fulsi: petebant tunc meos thalamos proci,
 qui nunc petuntur. rapida fortuna ac levis
 praecepsque regno eripuit, exilio dedit. 220
 confide regnis, cum levis magnas opes
 huc ferat et illuc casus -- hoc reges habent
 magnificum et ingens, nulla quod rapiat dies:
 prodesse miseris, supplices fido lare
 protegere. solum hoc Colchico regno extuli. 225
 decus illud ingens Graeciae et florem inclitum,
 praesidia Achivae gentis et prolem deum
 servasse memet. munus est Orpheus meum,
 qui saxa cantu mulcet et silvas trahit,
 geminique munus Castor et Pollux meum est 230
 satique Borea quique trans Pontum quoque
 summoti Lynceus lumine immisso videt.
 omnesque Minyae: nam ducem taceo ducum,
 pro quo nihil debetur: hunc nulli imputo:
 vobis revexi ceteros, unum mihi. 235
 incesse nunc et cuncta flagitiaingere.
 fatebor: obici crimen hoc solum potest.
 Argo reversa. virgini placeat pudor
 paterque placeat: tota cum ducibus ruet
 Pelasga tellus, hic tuus primum gener 240
 tauri ferocis ore flammanti occidet.
 fortuna causam quae volet nostram premat.
 non paenitet servasse tot regum decus.
 quodcumque culpa praemium ex omni tuli,
 hoc est penes te. si placet, damna ream; 245
 sed redde crimen. sum nocens, fateor, Creon:
 talem sciebas esse, cum genua attigi
 fidemque supplex praesidis dextrae peti:
 iterum miseriis angulum ac sedem rogo
 latebrasque viles: urbe si pelli placet, 250
 detur remotus aliquis in regnis locus.
 CR. Non esse me qui scepra violentus geram

- nec qui superbo miseras calcem pede,
testatus equidem videor haud clare parum
generum exulem legendo et afflictum et gravi 255
terrore pavidum, quippe quem poenae expetit
letoque Acastus regna Thessalica optinens.
senio tremētem debili atque aevo gravem
patrem peremptum queritur et caesi senis
discissa membra, cum dolo captae tuo 260
piaē sorores impium auderēt nefas.
potest Iason, si tuam causam amoves,
suam tueri: nullus innocuum cruor
contaminavit, afuit ferro manus
proculque vestro purus a coetu stetit. 265
tu, tu malorum machinatrix facinorum.
feminea cui nequitia ad audenda omnia.
robur virile est, nulla famae memoria,
egredere, purga regna, letales simul
tecum aufer herbas, libera cives metu. 270
alia sedens tellure sollicita deos.
- MED. Profugere cogis? redde fugienti ratem
et redde comitem — fugere cur solam iubes?
non sola veni. bella si metuis pati,
utrumque regno pelle. cur sotes duos 275
distinguis? illi Pelia, non nobis iacet;
fugam, rapinas adice, desertum patrem
lacerumque fratrem, quidquid etiam nunc novas
docet maritus coniuges, non est meum:
totiens nocens sum facta, sed numquam mihi. 280
- CR. Iam exisse decuit. quid seris fando moras?
- MED. Supplex recedens illud extremum precor,
ne culpa natos matris insones trahat.
- CR. Vade: hos paterno ut genitor excipiam sinu.
- MED. Per ego auspicatos regii thalami toros, 285
per spes futuras perque regnorum status,
Fortuna varia dubia quos agitat vice,
precor, brevem largire fugienti moram,

dum extrema natis mater intigo oscula,
 fortasse moriens. CR. Fraudibus tempus petis. 290
 MED. Quae fraus timeri tempore exiguo potest?
 CR. Nullum ad nocendum tempus angustum est malis.
 MED. Parumne miserae temporis lacrimis negas?
 CR. Etsi repugnat precibus infixus timor,
 unus parando dabitur exilio dies. 295
 MED. Nimis est, recidas aliquid ex isto licet:
 et ipsa propero. CR. Capite supplicium lues,
 clarum priusquam Phoebus attollat diem
 nisi cedis Isthmo. sacra me thalami vocant,
 vocat precari festus Hymenaeo dies. 300

CHORVS

Audax nimium qui freta primus
 rate tam fragili perfida rupit
 terrasque suas post terga videns
 animam levibus credidit auris, 304
 inter vitae mortisque vias
 307
 nimium gracili limite ducto.
 Candida nostri saecula patres 329
 videre, procul fraude remota. 330
 sua quisque piger litora tangens
 patrioque senex factus in arvo,
 parvo dives, nisi quas tulerat
 natale solum, non norat opes: 334
 nondum quisquam sidera norat, 309
 stellisque quibus pingitur aether 310
 non erat usus, nondum pluvias
 Hyadas poterat vitare ratis,
 non Oleniae lumina caprae
 nec quae sequitur flectitque senex
 Attica tardus plaustra Bootes, 315
 nondum Boreas, nondum Zephyrus

dubioque secans aequora cursu
 potuit tenui fidere ligno

nomen habebant.

Ausus Tiphys pandere vasto
carbasa ponto legesque novas
scribere ventis: nunc lina sinu
tendere toto, nunc prolato

pede transversos captare notos,
nunc antemnas medio tutas
ponere malo, nunc in summo
relegare loco, cum iam totos
avidus nimium navita flatus
optat et alto rubicunda tremunt
sipara velo.

bene dissaepi foedera mundi
traxit in unum Thessala pinus
iussitque pati verbera pontum,
partemque metus fieri nostri
mare sepositum.

dedit illa graves improba poenas
per tam longos ducta timores,
cum duo montes, claustra profundi,
hinc atque illinc subito impulsu
velut aetherio gement sonitu,
spargeret arces nubesque ipsas
mare deprensam.

palluit audax Tiphys et omnes
labente manu misit habenas,
Orpheus tacuit torpente lyra
ipsaque vocem perdidit Argo.

quid cum Siculi virgo Pelori:
rabidos utero succincta canes,
omnes pariter solvit hiatus?

quis non totos horruit artus
totiens uno latrante malo?

quid cum Ausonium dirae pestes
voce canora mare mulcerent,
cum Pieria resonans cithara

Thracius Orpheus solitam cantu

retinere rates paene coegit

Sirena sequi? quod fuit hujus

360

pretium cursus? aurea pellis

maiusque mari Medea malum,

merces prima digna carina.

Nunc iam cessit pontus et omnes

patitur leges: non Palladia

365

compacta manu regumque ferens

inclita remos quaeritur Argo —

quaelibet altum cumba pererrat;

terminus omnis motus et urbes

muros terra posuere nova,

370

nil qua fuerat sede reliquit

pervius orbis:

Indus gelidum potat Araxen,

Albin Persae Rhenumque bibunt —

venient annis saecula seris,

375

quibus Oceanus vincula rerum

laxet et ingens pateat tellus

Tethysque novos detegat orbes

nec sit terris ultima Thule.

NVTRIX

Alumna, celerem quo rapis tectis pedem?

380

resiste et iras comprime ac retine impetum.

Incerta qualis entheos gressus tulit

cum iam recepto maenas insanit deo

Pindi nivalis vertice aut Nysae iugis,

talis recursat huc et huc motu effero,

385

furoris ore signa lymphati gerens.

flammata facies spiritum ex alto citat,

proclamat, oculos uberi fletu rigat,

renidet: omnis specimen affectus capit.

quo pondus animi vergat, ubi ponat minas,

391

haeret: minatur aestuat queritur gemit.

390

ubi se iste fluctus franget? exundat furor.
 non facile secum versat aut medium scelus:
 se vincet: irae novimus veteris notas.
 magnum aliquid instat, efferum immane impium:
 vultum furoris cerno. di fallant metum!

MEDEA

Si quaeris odio, misera, quem statuas modum:
 imitare amorem. regias egone ut faces
 inulta patiar? segnis hic ibit dies,
 tanto petitus ambitu, tanto datus? 400
 dum terra caelum media libratum feret
 nitidusque certas mundus evolvit vices
 numerusque harenis derit et solem dies,
 noctem sequentur astra, dum siccas polus
 versabit Arctos, flumina in pontum cadent. 405
 numquàm meus cessabit in poenas furor
 crescetque semper -- quae ferarum immanitas,
 quae Scylla, quae Charybdis Ausonium mare
 Siculumque sorbens quaeve anhelantem premens
 Titana tantis Aetna fervebit minis? 410
 non rapidus annis, non procellosum mare
 Pontusve coro saevus aut vis ignium
 adiuta flatu possit imitari impetum
 irasque nostras; sternam et evertam omnia.

Timuit Creontem ac bellâ Thessalici ducis? 415
 amor timere neminem verus potest.
 sed cesserit coactus et dederit manus:
 adire certe et coniugem extremo alloqui
 sermone potuit -- hoc quoque extimuit ferox:
 laxare certe tempus immitis fugae 420
 genero licebat -- liberis unus dies
 datus est duobus. non queror tempus breve:
 multum patebit. faciet hic faciet dies
 quod nullus umquam taceat -- invadam deos
 et cuncta quatiâ. NVTR. Recipe turbatum malis, 425

era, pectus, animum mitiga. MED. Sola est quies,
 mecum ruina cuncta si video obruta:
 mecum omnia abeant. trahere, cum pereas, libet.
 NVTR. Quam multa sint timenda, si perstas, vide:
 nemo potentes aggredi tutus potest. 430

IASON

O dura fata semper et sortem asperam,
 cum saevit et cum parcit ex aequo malam!
 remedia quotiens invenit nobis deus
 periculis peiora: si vellem fidem
 praestare meritis coniugis, leto fuit 435
 caput offerendum; si mori nollem, fide
 misero carendum. non timor vicit fidem,
 sed trepida pietas: quippe sequeretur necem
 proles parentum. sancta si caelum incolis,
 Iustitia, numen invoco ac testor tuum: 440
 nati patrem vicere. quin ipsam quoque,
 etsi ferox est corde nec patiens iugi,
 consulere natis malle quam thalamiis reor.
 constituit animus precibus iratam aggredi.
 atque ecce, viso memet exiluit, furit, 445
 fert odia prae se: totus in vultu est dolor.

MED. Fugimus, Iason: fugimus -- hoc non est novum,
 mutare sedes; causa fugiendi nova est:
 pro te solebam fugere. discedo exeo,
 penatibus profugere quam cogis tuis: 450
 at quo remittis? Phasin et Colchos petam
 patriumque regnum quaeque fraternus cruor
 perfudit arva? quas peti terras iubes?
 quae maria monstras? Pontici fauces freti
 per quas revexi nobilem regum manum 455
 adulterum secuta per Symplegadas?
 parvamne Iolcon, Thessala an Tempe petam?
 quascumque aperui tibi vias, clausi mihi
 quo me remittis? exuli exilium imperas

nee das. eatur. regius iussit gener: 460

nihil recuso: dira suppliciaingere:

merui. cruentis paelicem poenit premat

regalis ira, vinculis oneret manus

clausamque saxo noctis aeternae obruat:

minora meritis patiar — ingratum caput, 465

revolvat animus igneos tauri halitus

hostisque subiti tela, cum iussu meo 469

térrigena miles mutua caede occidit: 470

adice expetita spolia Phrixei arietis

somnoque iussum lumina ignoto dare

insomne monstrum, traditum fratrem neci

et scelere in uno non semel factum scelus.

ausasque natas fraude deceptas mea 475

secare membra non revicturi senis:

per spes tuorum liberum et certum larem: 478

per victa monstra, per manus, pro te quibus

numquam peperci, perque praeteritos metus, 480

per caelum et undas, coniugi testes mei.

miserere, redde supplicii felix vicem. 482

aliena quaerens regna deserui mea: 477

ex opibus illis, quas procul raptas Scythae 483

usque a perustis Indiae populis agunt,

quas quia referta vix domus gaza capit, 485

ornamus auro nemora, nil exul tuli

nisi fratris artus: hos quoque impendi tibi:

tibi patria cessit, tibi pater, frater, pudor

haec dote nupsi. redde fugienti sua.

IAS. Perimere cum te vellet infestus Creos. 490

lacrimis meis evictus exilium dedit.

MED. Poenam putabam: munus ut video est fuga.

IAS. Dum licet abire, profuge teque hinc eripe:

gravis ira regum est semper. MED. Hoc suades mihi,

praestas Creusae: paelicem invisam amoves. 495

interque saevos gentis indomitae metus
armifero in arvo flammeum Aeetae pecus,

467

IAS. Medea amores obicit? MED. Et caedem et dolos.

IAS. Obicere tandem quod potes crimen mihi?

MED. Quodcumque feci. IAS. Restat hoc unum insuper, tuis ut etiam sceleribus flam nocens.

MED. Tua illa, tua sunt illa: cui prodest scelus 500
is fecit - omnes coniugem infamem arguant,
solus tuere, solus insontem voca:

tibi innocens sit quisquis est pro te nocens.

IAS. Ingrata vita est cuius acceptae pudet.

MED. Retinenda non est cuius acceptae pudet. 505

IAS. Quin potius ira concitum pectus doma,
placare natis. MED. Abdico eiuro abnuo
meis Creusa liberis fratres dabit?

IAS. Regina natis exulum, afflictis potens.

MED. Non veniat unquam tam malus miseris dies 510
qui prole foeda misceat prolem inelitam,
Phoebe nepotes Sisyphi nepotibus.

IAS. Quid, misera, meque teque in exitium trahis?

abscede quaeso. MED. Supplicem audivit Creó. 514

IAS. Quid facere possim, loquere. MED. Pro me? vel scelus.

IAS. Hinc rex et illinc - MED. Est et his maior metus:

Medea. nos † configere certemus sine,
sit pretium Iason. IAS. Cedo defessus malis.
et ipsa casus saepe iam expertos time.

MED. Fortuna semper omnis infra me stetit. 520

IAS. Acastus instat. MED. Propior est hostis Creó:
utrumque profuge. non ut in socerum manus
armes nec ut te caede cognata inquires

Medea cogit: innocens mecum fuge.

IAS. Et quis resistet, gemina si bella ingruant, 525
Creó atque Acastus arma si iungant sua?

MED. His adice Colchos, adice et Aeeten ducem,
Scythas Pelasgis iunge: demersos dabo.

IAS. Alta extimesco sceptrá. MED. Ne cupias vide.

IAS. Suspecta ne sint, longa colloquia amputa. 530

MED. Nunc summe toto Iuppiter caelo tona.

intende dextram, vindices flammæ para
omnemque ruptis nubibus mundum quate,
nec deligenti tela librentur manu

vel me vel istum: quisquis e nobis cadet 535

nocens peribit, non potest in nos tuum
errare fulmen. IAS. Sana meditari incipe
et placida fare. si quod ex soceri dōmo
potest fugam levare solamen, pete.

MED. Contemnere animus regias, ut scis, opes 540
potest soletque; liberos tantum fugæ
habere comites liceat in quorum sinu

lacrimas profundam. te novi nati manent.

IAS. Parere precibus cupere me fateor tuis;
pietas vetat: namque istud ut possim pati, 545

non ipse memet cogat et rex et socer.

hæc causa vita est, hoc periusti pectoris
curis levamen. spiritu citius queam

carere, membris, luce. MED. Sic natos amat?
bene est, tenetur, vulnere patuit locus, 550

suprema certe liceat abeuntem loqui

mandata, liceat ultimum amplexum dare:

gratum est et illud. voce iam extrema peto,

ne, si qua noster dubius effudit dolor,

maneant in animo verba: melioris tibi 555

memoria nostri sedeat: hæc iræ data

oblitterentur. IAS. Omnia ex animo expuli

precorque et ipse, fervidam ut mentem regas

placideque tractes: miseras lenit quies.

MED. Discessit. itane est? vadis oblitus mei 560
et tot meorum facinorum? excidimus tibi?

numquam excidemus. hoc age, omnes advoca

vires et artes: fructus est scelerum tibi

nullum scelus putare. vix fraudi est locus:

timemur. hac aggredere, qua nemo potest 565

quicquam timere. perge nunc, aude, incipe

quidquid potest Medea, quidquid non potest.

Tu, fida nutrix, socia maeroris mei
 varique casus, misera consilia adiuva.
 est palla nobis, munus aetherium, domus 570
 decusque regni, pignus Aeetae datum
 a Sole generis, est et auro textili
 monile fulgens quodque gemmarum nitor
 distinguit aurum, quo solent cingi comae.
 haec nostra nati dona nubenti ferant, 575
 sed ante diris inlita ac tincta artibus.
 vocetur Hecate. sacra letifica appara:
 statuuntur arae, flamma iam tectis sonet.

CHORVS

Nulla vis flammae tumidive venti
 tanta, nec teli metuenda torti, 580
 quanta cum coniunx viduata taedis
 ardet et odit;
 non ubi hibernos nebulosus imbres
 Auster advexit properatque torrens
 Hister et iunctos vetat esse pontes 585
 ac vagus errat;
 non ubi impellit Rhodanus profundum,
 aut ubi in rivos nivibus solutis
 sole iam forti medioque vere
 tabuit Haemus. 590
 caecus et ignis stimulatus ira
 nec regi curat patiturve frenos
 aut timet mortem: cupit ire in ipsos
 obuius enses.
 pareite, o divi, veniam precamur, 595
 vivat ut tutus mare qui subegit.
 sed furit vinci dominus profundi
 regna secunda.
 ausus aeternos agitare currus
 inmemor metae iuvenis paternae 600

quos polo sparsit furiosus ignes
ipse recepit.

constitit nulli via nota magno:
vade' qua tutum populo priori,
rumpe nec sacro violente sancta
foedera mundi. 605

Quisquis audacis tetigit carinae
nobiles remos nemorisque sacri
Pelion densa spoliavit umbra,
quisquis intravit scopulos vagantes 610
et tot emensus pelagi labores
barbara funem religavit ora
raptor externi rediturus auri.
exitu diro temerata ponti
iura piavit. 615

exigit poenas mare provocatum:
Tiphys in primis, domitor profundis,
liquit indocto regimen magistro:
litore externo, procul a paternis
occidens regnis tumultoque vili 620
tectus ignotas iacet inter umbras.
Aulis amissi memor inde regis
portibus lentis retinet carinas
stare querentes.

ille vocali genitus Camena, 625
cuius ad chordas modulante plectro
restitit torrens, siluere venti,
cum suo cantu volueris relicto
adfuit tota comitante silva,

Thracios sparsus iacuit per agres, 630
at caput tristi fluitavit Hebro:
contigit notam Styga Tartarumque,
non rediturus.

stravit Alcides Aquilone natos,
patre Neptuno genitum necavit 635

sumere innumeras solitum figuras:
 ipse post terrae pelagique pacem,
 post feri Ditis patefacta regna,
 vivus ardenti recubans in Oeta
 praebuilt saevis sua membra flammis. 640
 fabe consumptus gemini cruoris
 munere nuptae.

stravit Ancaeam violentus ictu
 saetiger: fratrem, Meleagre, matris
 impius mactas morerisque dextra 645
 matris iratae. meruere cuncti
 morte quod crimen tener expiavit
 Herculi magno puer inrepertus,
 raptus. heu, tutas puer inter undas.
 ite nunc, fortes, perarate pontum 650
 fonte timendo.

Idmonem, quamvis bene fata nosset.
 condidit serpens Libyeis harenis;
 omnibus verax, sibi falsus uni
 eoncidit Mopsus caruitque Thebis. 655
 ille si vere cecinit futura,
 igne fallaci nociturus Argis 658
 Nauplius praeceps cadet in profundum.
 * * patrioque pendet 660
 crimine poenas 660b

fulmine et ponto moriens Oileus:
 coniugis fatum redimens Phraei
 uxor, impendens animam marito.
 ipse qui praedam spoliūque iussit
 aureum prima revehi carina, 665
 ustus accenso Pelias aeno
 arsit angustas vagus inter undas.
 iam satis, divi, mare vindicastis:
 parcite iusso.

exul erravit Thetidis maritus

NVTRIX

Pavet animus, horret, magna perniciēs adest. 670
immaue quantum augescit et semet dolor
accendit ipse vimque praeteritam integrat.
vidi furem saepe et aggressam deos,
caelum trahentem: maius his, maius parat
Medea monstrum. namque ut attonito gradu 675
evasit et penetrare funestum attigit,
totas opes effundit et quidquid diu
etiam ipsa timuit promittit atque omnem explicat
turbam malorum, arcana secreta abdita,
et triste laeva † comprecans sacrum manu 680
pestes vocat quascumque ferventis creat
harena Libyae quasque perpetua nive
Taurus coerces frigore Arctoo rigens,
et omne monstrum. tracta magicis cantibus
squamifera latebris turba desertis adest. 685
hic saeva serpens corpus immensum trahit,
trifidamque linguam exertat et quaerit quibus
mortifera veniat: carmine audito stupet
tumidumque nodis corpus aggestis plicat
cogitque in orbes. 'parva sunt' inquit 'mala 690
et vile telum est, ima quod tellus creat:
caelo petam venena. iam iam tempus est
aliquid movere fraude vulgari altius.
huc ille vasti more torrentis iacens
descendat anguis, cuius immensos duae. 695
maior minorque, sentiunt nodos ferae
(maior Pelasgis apta, Sidoniis minor)
pressasque tandem solvat Ophiuchus manus
virusque fundat; adsit ad cantus meos
laccessere ausus gemina Python numina. 700
et Hydra et omnis redeat Herculeae manu
succisa serpens, caede se reparans sua.
tu quoque relictis pervigil Colchis ades.

sopite primum cantibus, serpens, meis.'

Postquam evocavit omne serpentum genus. 705

congerit in unum frugis infaustae mala:

quaecumque generat invius saxis Eryx.

quae fert opertis hieme perpetua iugis

sparsus cruore Caucasus Promethei.

et quis sagittas divites Arabes linunt 711

pharetraque pugnax Medus aut Parthi leves 710

aut quos sub axe frigido sucos legunt 712

lucis Suebae nobiles Hercyniis:

quodcumque tellus vere nidifico creat

aut rigida cum iam bruma discussit decus 715

nemorum et nivali cuncta constrinxit gelu.

quodcumque gramen flore mortifero viret.

quicumque tortis sucus in radicibus

causas nocendi gignit, attrectat manu.

Haemonius illas contulit pestes Athos. 720

has Pindus ingens. illa Pangaei iugis

teneram cruenta falce deposuit comam:

has aluit altum gurgitem Tigris premens.

Danuvius illas, has per arentes plagas

tepidis Hydaspes gemmifer currens aquis. 725

nomenque terris qui dedit Baetis suis

Hesperia pulsans maria languenti vado.

haec passa ferrum est. dum parat Phoebus diem.

illius alta nocte succisus frutex;

at huius ungue secta cantato seges. 730

Mortifera carpit gramina ac serpentium

saniem exprimit miscetque et obscenas aves

maestique cor bubonis et raucae strigis

exsecta vivae viscera. haec scelerum artifex

discreta ponit; his rapax vis ignium. 735

his gelida pigri frigoris glacies inest.

addit venenis verba non illis minus

metuenda. sonuit ecce vesano gradu

canitque. mundus vocibus primis tremit.

1 0 - 2 | 1 0 - 2 // 1 0 - 2 | 1 0 - 2 /

Act IV, sc. 2]

MEDEA

45

MEDEA.

Comprecor vulgus silentum vosque ferales deos 740
 et Chaos caecum atque opacam Ditis umbrosi domum,
 Tartari ripis † ligatos squalidae Mortis specus.
 supplicis, animae, remissis currite ad thalamos novos:
 rota resistat membra torquens, tangat Ixion humum.
 Tantalus securus undas hauriat Pirenidas. 745
 gravior uni poena sedeat coniugis socero mei:
 lubricus per saxa retro Sisypnum volvat lapis.
 vos quoque, urnis quas foratis inritus ludit labor,
 Danaides, colte: vestras hic dies quaerit manus. --
 nunc meis vocata sacris, noctium sidus, veni 750
 pessimos induta vultus, fronte non una minax.

Tibi more gentis vinculo solvens comam
 secreta nudo nemora lustravi pede
 et evocavi nubibus siccis aquas
 egique ad inum maria, et Oceanus graves 755
 interius undas aestibus victis dedit;
 pariterque mundus lege confusa aetheris
 et solem et astra vidit et vetitum mare
 tetigistis, ursae. temporum flexi vices:
 aestiva tellus floruit cantu meo, 760
 coacta messem vidit hibernam Ceres;
 violenta Phasis vertit in fontem vada
 et Hister, in tot ora divisus, truces
 compressit undas omnibus ripis piger.

Sonuere fluctus, tumuit insanum mare 765
 tacente vento; nemoris antiqui domus
 amisit umbras, vocis imperio meae
 die reducto; Phoebus in medio stetit
 Hyadesque nostris cantibus motae labant:
 adesse sacris tempus est, Phoebe, tuis. 770
 tibi haec cruenta sarta texuntur manu,
 novena quae serpens ligat,
 tibi haec Typhoeus membra quae discors tulit.
 qui regna concussit Iovis.

2 1 0 - 2 | 1 0 - 2 // 1 0 - 2 | 1 0 - 2 /

vectoris istie perfidi sanguis inest, 775
 quem Nessus expirans dedit.
 Octaeus isto cinere defecit rogos,
 qui virus Herculeum bibit.
 piaae sororis, impiae matris, facem
 ultricis Altheae vides. 780
 reliquit istas invio plumas specu
 Harpyia, dum Zeten fugit.
 his adice pinnas sauciaae Stympthalidos
 Lernaea passae spicula.
 sonuistis, arae, tripodas agnosco meos 785
 favente commotos dea.

Video Triviae currus agiles,
 non quos pleno lucida vultu
 pernox agitat, sed quos facie
 lurida maesta, cum Thessalicis 790
 vexata minis caelum freno
 propiore legit. sic face tristem
 pallida lucem funde per auras,
 horrore novo terre populos
 inque auxilium, Dictynna, tuum 795
 pretiosa sonent aera Corinthi.
 tibi sanguineo caespite sacrum
 sollemne damus, tibi de medio
 rapta sepulchro fax nocturnos
 sustulit ignes, tibi mota caput 800
 flexa voces cervice dedi,
 tibi funereo de more iacens
 passos cingit vitta capillos.
 tibi iactatur tristis Stygia
 ramus ab unda, tibi nudato 805
 pectore maenas sacro feriam
 bracchia cultro. manet noster
 sanguis ad aras: assuesce, manus.
 stringere ferrum carosque pati

posse cruores sacrum laticem
percussa dedi. 810

quodsi nimium saepe vocari
quereris votis, ignosce precor:
causa vocandi, Persei, tuos
saepius arcus una atque eadem est 815
semper, Iason.

tu nunc vestes tinge Creusae,
quas cum primum sumpserit, imas
urat serpens flamma medullas.
ignis fulvo clusus in auro 820

latet obscurus, quem mihi caeli
qui furta luit viscere feto
dedit et docuit condere vires
arte. Prometheus. dedit et tenui
sulphure tectos Mulciber ignes. 825

et vivacis fulgura flammae
de cognato Phaethonte tuli.
habeo mediae dona Chimaerae.
habeo flammas usto tauri
guttore raptas, quas permixto 830

felle Medusae tacitum iussi
servare malum.

adde venenis stimulos, Hecate.
donisque meis semina flammae
condita serva. fallant visus 835

tactusque ferant, inect in pectus
venasque calor, stillent artus
ossaque fument vincatque suas
flagrante coma nova nupta faces.

Vota tenentur: ter latratus 840
audax Hecate dedit et sacros
edidit ignes face lucifera.

Peracta vis est omnis: huc natos voca,
pretiosa per quos dona nubenti feras.
ite, ite, nati, matris infaustae genus. 845

placate vobis munere et multa prece
 dominam ac novercam. vadite et celeres domum
 referte gressus, ultimo amplexu ut fruamr.

CHORVS

Quoniam cruenta maenas praeceps amore saevo	850
rapitur? quod impotenti facinus parat furore?	
vultus citatus ira riget et caput feroci	
quatiens superba motu	855
regi minatur ultro. quis credat exulem?	
flagrant genae rubentes, pallor fugat ruborem,	
nullum vagante forma	860
servat diu colorem. huc fert pedes et illuc,	
ut tigris orba natis cursu furente lustrat	
Gangeticum nemus.	865
frenare nescit iras Medea, non amores;	
nunc ira amorque causam iunxere: quid sequetur?	
quando efferet Pelasgis	870
nefanda Colchis arvis gressum metuque solvet	
regnum simulque reges? nunc, Phoebe, mitte currus	
nullo morante loro,	875
nox condat alma lucem, mergat diem timendum	
dux noctis Hesperus.	

NVNTIVS

Periere cuncta, concidit regni status.

nata atque genitor cinere permixto iacent. 880

CHOR. Qua fraude capti? NVNT. Qua solent reges capi:
donis. CHOR. In illis esse quis potuit dolus?

NVNT. Et ipse miror vixque iam facto malo
potuisse fieri credo. quis cladis modus?

avidus per omnem regiae partem furit 885
ut iussus ignis: iam domus tota occidit.

urbi timetur. CHOR. Unda flammis opprimat.

NVNT. Et hoc in ista clade mirandum accidit:

alit unda flammis, quoque prohibetur magis,
magis ardet ignis: ipsa praesidia occupat. 890

NVTRIX

Effer citatum sede Pelopea gradum.

Medea. praeceps quaslibet terras pete.

MEDEA

Egone ut recedam? si profugissem prius,
ad hoc redirem. nuptias specto novas.

quid, anime, cessas? sequere felicem impetum. 895

pars ultionis ista, qua gaudes, quota est?

amas adhuc, furiose, si satis est tibi

caelebs Iason. quaere poenarum genus

hanc usitatum iamque sic temet para:

fas omne cedat, abeat expulsus pudor: 900

vindicta levis est quam ferunt purae manus.

incumbe in iras teque languentem excita

penitusque veteres pectore ex imo impetus

violentus hauri. quidquid admissum est adhuc,

pietas vocetur. hoc age et faxis sciant 905

quam levia fuerint quamque vulgaris notae

quae commodavi scelera. prolusit dolor

per ista noster: quid manus poterant rudes

audere magnum? quid puellaris furor?
Medea nunc sum; crevit ingenium malis.

910

Iuvat, iuvat rapuisse fratrum caput:
artus iuvat secuisse et arcano patrem
spoliasse sacro, iuvat in exitium senis
armasse natus. quaere materiam, dolor:
ad omne facinus non rudem dextram afferes.

915

Quo te igitur, ira, mittis, aut quae perfido
intendis hosti tela? nescio quid ferox
decrevit animus intus et nondum sibi
audet fateri. stulta properavi nimis:
ex paelice utinam liberos hostis meus
aliquos haberet — quidquid ex illo tuum est,
Creusa peperit. placuit hoc poenae genus,
meritoque placuit: ultimum. agnosco, scelus
animo parandum est — liberi quondam mei,
vos pro paternis sceleribus poenas date.

920

925

Cor pepulit horror, membra torpescunt gelu
pectusque tremuit. ira discessit loco
materque tota coniuge expulsa redit.
egone ut meorum liberum ac prolis meae
fundam cruorem? melius, a, demens furor!
incognitum istud facinus ac dirum nefas,
a me quoque absit; quod scelus miseri luent?
scelus est Iason genitor et maius scelus
Medea mater — occidant, non sunt mei.
pereant? mei sunt. crimine et culpa carent.
sunt innocentes: fateor, et frater fuit.
quid, anime, titubas? ora quid lacrimae rigant
variamque nunc huc ira, nunc illuc amor
diducit? anceps aestus incertam rapit;
ut saeva rapidi bella cum venti gerunt
utrumque fluctus maria discordes agunt
dubiumque fervet pelagus, haut aliter meum
cor fluctuatur. ira pietatem fugat
iramque pietas cede pietati, dolor.

930

935

940

Huc, cara proles, unicum afflictæ domus 945
solamen, huc vos fert et infusos mihi
coniungite artus. habeat incolumes pater,
dum et mater habeat — urguet exilium ac fuga.
iam iam meo rapiuntur avulsi e sinu,
flentes, gementes osculis — pereant patri. 950
periere matri. rursus increscit dolor
et fervet odium, repetit invitam manum
antiqua Erinys — ira, qua ducis, sequor.
utinam superbae turba Tantalidos meo
exisset utero bisque septenos parens 955
natos tulissem! sterilis in poenas fui
fratri patrique quod sat est, peperì duos.

Quonam ista tendit turba Furiarum impotens?
quem quaerit aut quò flammeos ictus parat,
aut cui cruentas agmen infernum faces 960
intentat? ingens anguis excusso sonat
tortus flagello. quem trabe infesta petit
Megaera? — cuius umbra dispersis venit
incerta membris? frater est, poenas petit
dabimus, sed omnes. fige luminibus faces. 965
lania, perure, pectus en Furiis patet.

Discedere a me, frater, ultrices deas
manesque ad imos ire securas iube:
mihi me relinque et utere hac, frater, manu
quæ strinxit ensem — victima manes tuos 970
placamus ista. quid repens affert sonus?
parantur arma meque in exitium petunt.
excelsa nostræ tecta conscendam domus
caede incohata. perge tu mecum còmes.
tum quoque ipsa corpus hinc mecum aveham. 975
nunc hoc age, anime: non in occulto tibi est
perdenda virtus: approba populo manum.

IASON

Quicumque regum cladibus fidus doles.

concurrere, ut ipsam sceleris auctorem horridi
capiamus. huc, huc fortis armiferi cohors 980
conferte tela, vertite ex imo domum.

MED. Iam iam recepi sceptrum germanum, patrem.
spoliumque Colchi pecudis auratae tenent:
rediere regna, rapta virginitas redit.

o placida tandem numina, o festum diem. 985

o nuptialem! vade, perfectum est scelus:

vindicta nondum: perage, dum faciunt manus.

quid nunc moraris, anime? quid dubitas potens?

iam cecidit ira. paenitet facti, pudet.

quid, misera, feci? misera? paeniteat licet. 990

feci — voluptas magna me invitam subit.

et ecce crescit. derat hoc unum mihi.

spectator iste. nil adhuc facti reor:

quidquid sine isto fecimus sceleris perit.

IAS. En ipsa tecti parte praecipiti imminet. 995

huc rapiat ignes aliquis, ut flammis cadat

suis perusta. MED. Congere extremum tuis

natis, Iason, funus, ac tumulum strue:

coniunx socerque iusta iam functis habent.

a me sepulti: natus hic fatum tulit. 1000

hic te vidente dabitur exitio pari.

IAS. Per numen omne perque communes fugas

torosque, quos non nostra violavit fides.

iam parce nato. si quod est crimen, meum est:

me dedo morti: noxium macta caput. 1005

MED. Hae qua recusas, qua doles, ferrum exigam.

i nunc, superbe, virginum thalamos pete,

relinque matres. IAS. Unus est poenae satis.

MED. Si posset una caede satiari haec manus.

nullam petisset. ut duos perimam, tamen 1010

nimum est dolori numerus angustus meo.

IAS. Iam perage coeptum facinus, haut ultra precor. 1014

in matre si quod pignus etiam nunc latet.
scrutabor ense viscera et ferro extraham.

1012

moramque saltem supplicis dona meis.

1015

MED. Perfruere lento scelere, ne propera. dolor:
meus dies est: tempore accepto utimur.

IAS. Infesta, memet perime. **MED.** Misereri iubes.

bene est, peractum est. plura non habui, dolor.

quae tibi litarem. lumina huc tumida alleva,

1020

ingrate Iason. coniugem agnoscis tuam?

sic fugere soleo. patuit in caelum via:

squamosa gemini colla serpentes iugo

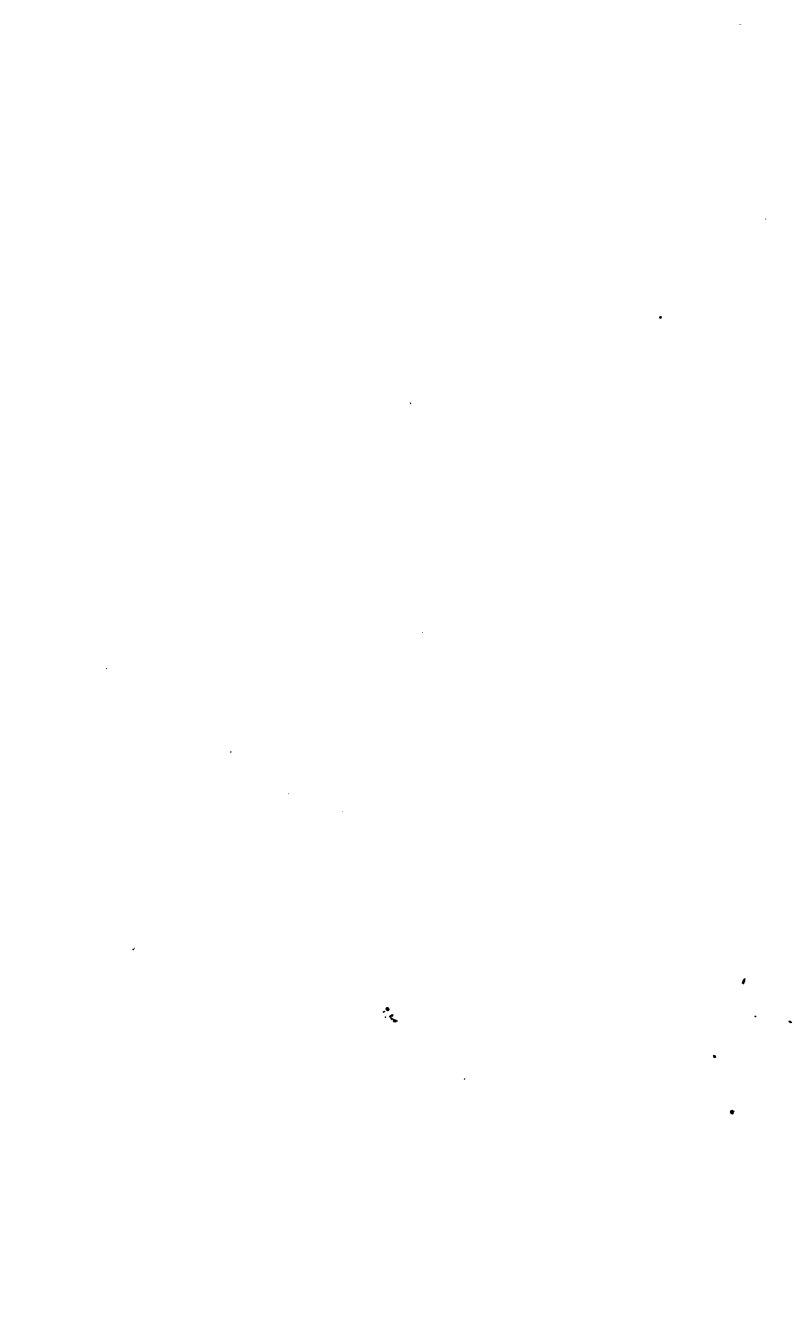
summissa praebent. recipe iam natos, parens:

ego inter auras aliti curru vehar.

1025

IAS. Per alta vade spatia sublimi aethere.

testare nullos esse, qua veheris, deos.



NOTES

ACT I

SCENE 1 (vv. 1-55). Medea invokes the vengeance of the gods above and beneath on King Creon and his daughter, who have seduced her husband from her, and at the close vows that her repudiation shall be marked by scenes as terrible as her marriage with Jason had been.

2. *Lucina*: the bringer-to-light an epithet often applied to Diana (cf. Horace, *C. S.* 15) and also to Juno (cf. Plautus, *Aul.* 684). *Luna* (*Luc-na*), which is the Latin name of Phoebe (Diana), is the same word in another form. *quaeque . . . docuisti*: Pallas, identified by the Romans with their Minerva. It was under her direction that the materials were chosen and the work done in building the Argo (cf. *vv.* 365-367).

3. *novam*: The Argo was supposed to have been the first Grecian vessel that dared attempt a long sea voyage.

4. *profundi . . . dominator maris*: Neptune (cf. *dominus profundis*, *v.* 597).

5. *Titan*: a name frequently applied by the poets to Helios, the sun-god, as a descendant of the Titans who were overthrown by Zeus. In *v.* 410 Enceladus is spoken of under this designation. *orbi*: sc. *terrarum*. *Orbi* is indirect object of *dividens*.

6. "Offering thy bright image as confidant to unuttered mysteries."

7. *Hecate triformis*: cf. *fronte non unu* (c. 751), *triceps Hecate* (Ovid, *Met.* 7, 194). This goddess was thought of as having functions in heaven, on earth and in the infernal world. She was identified or confused, therefore, with Selene or Phoebe (Luna), with Artemis (Diana), and with Persephone (Proserpina).

10. *Manesque impios*: ghosts of the wicked dead, who are invoked along with their rulers, Pluto and Proserpina.

11. *dominum*: Pluto. *dominam...raptam*: Proserpina, who had been carried off by Pluto and made his bride (Hyginus, *Fab.* 146; Ovid, *Met.* 5, 359-424), but not deserted later as Medea had been; hence the phrase "with better faith." *voce non fausta*: because invocation of the powers of darkness was *nefas*.

13. *adeste*: "Be present to aid"—a common form of invocation (cf. *adsis*, Vergil, *Georg.* 1, 18, etc., etc.). *deae*: the Furies (Alecto, Megaera and Tisiphone), whose duty it was to torment men for their evil deeds. They were called by the Greeks *Erinyes*, *Eumenides* (well disposed) and *Semnae* (blessed), and by the Romans *Dirae* and *Furiae*. Their tongues protruded, and instead of hair they had living serpents. In one hand each carried a torch (*trabe*, c. 962) and in the other a scourge whose lashes were living serpents (*anguis*, c. 961), and they were always bespattered with the blood of their helpless victims. (Cf. Vergil's description of Tisiphone (*Aen.* 6, 571).

15-17. Cf. *Oct.* 23-25.

17. *coniugi...novae*: the princess Glauce or Creusa, whom Jason was about to marry.

18. *socero*: king Creon. *regiae stirpi*: the whole royal house of Corinth.

19. *mihi peius aliquid*: Having called down destruction upon her rival and her rival's family, she now prays that a fate still worse may befall her faithless husband (cf. with cc. 20-25 Dido's curse on Aeneas, Vergil, *Aen.* 4, 612-620).

22. *hospes*: a stranger or guest, i. e. homeless.

24. *similes...matri*: like their father (in faithlessness), like their mother (in bold wickedness and unhappy desolation).

26. *peperi*: "I have given birth to vengeance." Had Medea already some idea of the means by which she finally punished her recreant husband (cf. *cr.* 549, 550)? *querelas...scro*? It is time for action, not for words.

27. *manibus*: dat.— from their hands. *faces*: for the marriage procession.

28. *caelo*: same construction as *manibus*. Medea was credited (Ovid. *Met.* 7, 207-209) with having power to darken the heavens. *spectat...poli*: "Does he see this, and does he still show his face and pass on in his wonted course?" The allusion is to the sun's having hidden his face and retraced his course in horror at sight of the feast of Thyestes (cf. *Agam.* 27, 295-297; *Thyestes* 776, 789-793, 1030 ff.). *nostri sator generis*: Phoebus (Sol), who was the father of Aetes and hence grandfather of Medea.

35. *Corinthos*: nom. *gemino...litore*: abl. quality. Cf. *bimaris Corinthi* (Horace, *C.* 1, 7, 2), *bimari Corintho* (Ovid, *Met.* 5, 407), *bimares terras* (*Oed.* 282). *opponens moras*: cf. *flectens moras*, *c.* 149. The long and dangerous voyage around the Peloponnesus was rendered necessary by the presence of the narrow isthmus of Corinth which separated the Corinthian Gulf from the Aegean Sea. Many attempts were made in ancient times to pierce the obstacle, but it was not until our own day (1894) that a canal was completed. It follows nearly the line surveyed in 67 A. D. for Nero, who broke ground for it with his own hands (Suetonius. *Nero* 19).

36. *eremata*: nom., agreeing with *Corinthos*. *flam-mis...duo*: unite the two seas with flame.

37. *pronubam...pinum*: one of the torches (cf. *faces*, *c.* 27) borne in the marriage procession. *Pronubam* is adjective.

40. *per viscera ipsa*: the entrails of the victims on the

altar a common method of divination (cf. *Oed.* 352 ff.).

43. *Caucasum*: This range of mountains, with its rugged heights and everlasting snows, represented to the ancients all that was repellent and terrible in nature. The figure here is placed very appropriately in the mouth of Medea, whose childhood's home had been at the base of the Caucasus.

45. *effera, ignota, etc.*: neuter.

48. Scan as follows: *funus | per ar | tis levi | a me-
mo | rari | nimis*. The third foot is a dactyl, the fourth a tribrach and the sixth a pyrrhic.

49. *haec*: These things "All this I did as a girl" (cf. *c.* 909). *exurgat*: *arsurgat*.

51. *accingere*: the "middle" use of the passive *accin-
gor* "Gird yourself."

52. *paria . . . thalamis*: Her marriage with Jason had involved the betrayal and desertion of her father and mother and the murder of her brother. She now proposes to celebrate her repudiation by means of crimes as dreadful.

54. *hoc*: sc. *modo*.

SCENE 2 (VV. 56-115). A chorus of Corinthian women approaches chanting the epithalamion or marriage song of Jason and Creusa. First the gods above are invoked (56-74), then the beauty of the bride (75-81, 93-98) and the groom (82-89) is praised, as taunt is flung at the rejected wife (102-106, 114, 115), and the young men are challenged to make the most of the unusual license granted them by the occasion (107-114). For the metres see Introduction, p. 9.

59. *Tonans*, the proper epithet of Jupiter (cf. Horace, *C.* 3, 5, 1), here is extended to his sister-wife as well.

61. *femina*: sc. *bos*. *nivei . . . corporis*: gen. quality, which here does not differ in force from the ablative in *ter-
gore candido* above. *Candido* and *nicei* both refer to the requirement that the victim's body be of spotless white (those offered to the infernal gods were black), and *intemp-
tata ingo* just below suggests the further law that they must not have been contaminated by subjection to the service of man.

62. *placet*: (*a* long) subjunctive.

63. *quae...retinet*: Pallas (Minerva), representing scientific and civilized warfare, as Ares (Mars) represented sheer force (Homer, *Il.* 5, 840; 21, 406).

67. *tu qui...ades*: Hymen (cf. *v.* 110). *facibus legitimis*: dat. Hymen was invoked in song at all Greek weddings (see *v.* 116 and note).

71. *tu quae...redis*: Hesperus, the evening star. Cf. *tarde...redis...amantibus* with *Vesper...expectata diu vix tandem lumina tollit* (Catullus, 62, 2). *geminii praevia temporis*: forerunner of the twilight (cf. *dux noctis*, *v.* 878).

76. *Cecropias nurus*: daughters of Cecrops, i. e., Athenian maidens.

79. *muris quod caret oppidum*: Sparta.

80. *Aonius*: Bæotian or Theban.

81. *Alpheos*: An Arcadian stream. The bride is said to outshine the maids of all these regions.

82. *forma*: abl.

83. *Aesonio duci*: Jason.

84. *proles fulminis improbi*: Bacchus, referring to the manner in which Jupiter approached Semele (see Cl. Dict., artt. *Bacchus* and *Semele*).

86. *qui tripodas movet*: Phoebus Apollo, who inspired the Delphic and other oracles (cf. *vv.* 785, 786).

87. *virginis asperae*: Diana (cf. *saevae virginis*, Oct. 976, where the epithet applies to her cruelty in requiring human sacrifices). Here *asperae* may refer to her own austerity of habit.

89. *Pollux caestibus aptior*: cf. Horace, *S.* 2, 1, 26.

91, 92. *vineat, superet*: surpass, excel.

93. *haec*: the bride. *constitit*: "has taken her place."

95. *cum sole*: "with (at) the coming of the sun."

97. *Phoebe*: (*e* long) the moon. *non suo*: reflected.

98. The sense appears to be incomplete here, and Leo

suggests two lines to restore the probable connection, as follows:

*talem dum iuvenis conspicit, en rubor
perfudit subito purpureus genas.*

101. *luce nova*: abl. time--at dawn. *roscidus*: moist with dew after his night watch.

102. *Phasidis horridi*: This reading makes *Phasidis* refer to the Colchian river, while in the other, *Phasidos horridis*, the adjective agrees with *thalamis* and *Phasidos* is a feminine substantive referring to Medea herself. *Ereptus solitus* and *trepidus*, like *felix*, modify *tu*, the implied subject of *corripe* (v. 105).

105. *Aeoliam virginem*: Jason's bride, Creusa, thus designated as a descendant of Aeolus, the son of Hellen--not Aeolus the ruler of the winds, who is mentioned by Homer (*Od.* 10, 1 ff.) and Vergil (*Aen.* 1, 52 ff.)

106. The allusion is to the opposition of Medea's father to Jason. This time the intended father-in-law is willing.

107. *iurgio*: cf. *fescenninus*, v. 113.

108. *hinc illine . . . mittite carmina*: sing responsively, as in Catullus 62.

109. "Rarely is such license granted as against our betters."

110. "Fair and noble scion of Bacchus." Hymen, the god of marriage, is said to have been the son of Bacchus and Venus (wine and love), though other accounts are given (see Cl. Dict., art. *Hymen*).

111. *multifidam . . . pinum*: A note in Allen & Greenough's Ovid explains *multifidus faces* (*Met.* 7.259) as "light-wood split fine."

113. *dicax . . . fescenninus*: cf. *procaz fescenninus*, Catullus 61, 126. The "fescennine verses," containing rude banter (*iurgio*, v. 107) and coarse jokes, were used in very early times by the rustics of central Italy on various occasions of public merry-making, but came later to be restricted to wedding feasts. Verse 113 is spondaic.

114. *illa*: Medea.

115. *si qua*: equivalent to the relative *quae*.

ACT II

SCENE 1 (vv. 116-178). Medea, hearing the hymenaeus, realizes that she has actually been deserted, recalls to mind her claims on Jason and repeats her vow of vengeance. Her aged nurse cautions her against speaking so freely, but in vain.

116. *hymenaeus*: The chant of the marriage procession (cf. Catullus 61 and 62). For one account of the corresponding Roman cry, "Talasio," see Livy 1, 9, 12.

117. *vix adhuc credo*; a very natural touch. She had known what was preparing and had suffered long and keenly in anticipation, yet the actual realization of it came upon her like a blow.

118. *hoc*: explained by its appositive *deserere* (v. 120).

119. *solam*: sc. *me*.

121. *seclere*: a word which Medea does not hesitate to apply to her own acts, e. g. in vv. 129, 135, 500, 1016 (cf. *nefas*, v. 122).

122. "Does he forsooth believe that my every resource of evil is exhausted?" *Adeone* may be regarded here as simply a stronger *nonne*.

124. *queam*: subjunctive in impassioned question.

125. *est coniunx*: sc. *illi*. *in hanc ferrum exigatur*: "Into her let the sword be plunged." For the construction cf. Seneca, *Consolatio ad Marciam*, 16, 3: *Tela quae (Fortuna) in Scipiones... exegit*; also *ferrum exigam*, v. 1006.

131. *parvus comes*: her brother, Absyrtus. For the different forms of the story see v. 473 and note.

133. *Pelias senis*: Jason's uncle, who had deprived him of his throne and sent him in search of the golden fleece, hoping he would never return. Medea on reaching Iolcos had shown her power in restoring to youth the aged father of her husband (Ovid, *Met.* 7, 162-293), and the daughters of Pelias desired the same boon for their father. Medea

assented, directed them to cut his body into bits and place them in a caldron (*aeno*, v. 666), but when this had been done refused to perform her part. This was her revenge for Pelias' wrongs to her husband and the slights put upon herself by the daughters. She and Jason were compelled to flee in order to escape the vengeance of Pelias' son Acastus, and came to Corinth. Pelias is referred to frequently in this play (e. g. in vv. 201, 257, 475, 522). *sparsum ponito*: see v. 473.

135. *nullum scelus irata feci*: Of the two passions, anger and love, it was the latter that had prompted all her crimes.

136. *movit*: sc. *scelera* or *me*

137. By a sudden turn of thought she is led to seek excuses for her lover. *alieni...factus*: brought under another's direction and control (cf. the more common *sui iuris*). *arbitri*: *arbitrii*, gen. of *arbitrium*.

142. *nostri...meo*: This confusion of number in the pronoun of the first person is quite common, especially in colloquial Latin. *nostri*: objective genitive of *nos*; for the partitive *nostrum* is used. *muneri...meo*: my gift, his life.

144. *genetricem...natis*: In Euripides (*Med.* 275) Medea is ordered to take her children with her into banishment. Seneca (cf. vv. 284, 541-546) represents her as desiring to do so but forbidden by Jason.

146. *petatur*: sc. *Creon*.

149. *Malea*: a promontory at the southeastern extremity of the Peloponnesus. *flectens moras*: cf. *opponens moras*, v. 35.

153. *referre*: repay, take vengeance.

159. *Fortuna fortes metuit*: Cf. *fortes fortuna iuvat*, Pliny, *Epist.* 6, 16, where it is quoted, perhaps, from the *fortes fortuna adiuvat* of Terence (*Phormio* 1, 4, 26); also *audentes fortunā iuvat*, Vergil, *Aen.* 10, 284.

166. *hic*: here, in me.

169. *sint...edita*: "No, though they spring from the earth"—alluding to the *terrigenae* (cf. *cc.* 469, 470), whom Jason had vanquished by her aid.

171. *flam*: sc. *Medea*—"I shall become Medea." Cf. *Medea nunc sum*, v. 910. *cui sim vides*: "You see to whom I am a mother"—i. e. to none, since my sons have been taken away.

177. *cardo strepit*: The door of a Grecian house was suspended not on hinges but on pivots (*cardines*), usually of wood, whose turning in their sockets was far from noiseless. In the comedy the entrance of a character is often heralded by some allusion to the creaking of the pivot (e. g. Plautus *Aul.* 657; *Mil. Glor.* 154; Terence, *Ad.* 264). The verb as a rule is *crepit* or *concrepuit*, with *foris* or *ostium* as subject.

SCENE 2 (vv. 179-300). Creon appears, declaring that Medea must be banished at once. She boldly accuses him of having wronged her, and claims that if there is guilt anywhere that calls for punishment it is Jason's as well as her own. The king asserts that his own power is endangered by her presence and repeats his order to depart at once. She begs for the privilege of saying farewell to her children and finally gains a respite of a single day.

179. *Aeetae genus*: for *Aeeta nata*, as often.

183, 184. *luem*: *Medea*. *gener*: Jason.

189. *iubete sileat*: a post-Augustan usage for the more common *iubete eam silere*.

193. Either *innocens* is ironical here, or it is said as a general truth—(only) an innocent woman asks, etc.

194. *si iudicas*: "If you are acting as judge, hear the case; if as despot, utter your commands." The mss. assign the whole line to Medea. Leo divides it between Medea and Creon, thus making *regnas* the "general" second person, and strikes out v. 195, which, however is perfectly in keeping with the tone of the whole dialogue, and suggests the retort, *iniqua*, etc., in v. 196. On the whole the manuscript reading seems preferable here, and has been restored.

197. *Colchis*: dat. *qui avexit*: Jason.

199. *parte...altera*: without hearing the other side.

200. *licet*: concessive, as in *v.* 169.

201. *Pellia*: the Latin form of *Pelias*. For the sense of the line cf. *v.* 133 and note. A case of *argumentum ad hominem*.

202. *causae*: used in its Roman legal sense of a case on trial (cf. *vv.* 242, 262). *egregiae*: ironical.

203. "How hard it is to turn from wrath a mind once roused, and how kingly one deems it who has laid his grasp upon the scepter to go on as he has begun, I learned in my royal home."

208. *expulsa . . . deserta*; Notice the asyndeton, which is very common in these tragedies (cf. *Oct.* 176).

210. *avo*: cf. *v.* 28 and note; also *v.* 512.

212. *Pontus* was the name of both a sea (*Pontus Euxinus*, the Black Sea) and a country on its shores. Here the connection makes it refer to the former (cf. *pontum Scythen. Herc. Fur.* 1210). *a tergo videt*: We should say that Colchis was at the head of the Black Sea, but the Romans, looking toward the mouth, thought of it as *a tergo*.

213. *maria dulcescunt*: It is said that the water of this sea is "as sweet in many places as that of the rivers which flow into it." Pliny (*N. H.* 4, 24) declares that the Danube (*Hister, vv.* 585, 763), on account of its swift current, sweetens the water for forty miles out. Cf. also Polybius, 4, 41, 42.

219. *rapida*: contains the same root as *eripuit* (*v.* 220), and suggests the same idea here (cf. *rapax fortuna*, Horace, *C.* 1, 34, 14).

220. *eripuit*: *sc. me*

222. *hoc*: *prodesse, protegere*.

225. *solum hoc*: *servasse*; cf. *obici . . . reversa*, *v.* 237.

226, 227. *decus. florem. praesidia. prolem*: the Argonauts.

228. *memet*: subject of *servasse*. Orpheus: For his fate see *v.* 625 ff. and note on *v.* 625.

231. *sati Borea*: Calais and Zetes (cf. *Aquilone natos. v.* 634).

233 *ducem...ducum*: Jason.

235. *vobis*: for you, i. e., all the Greeks. *unum mihi*: him alone for myself.

237. *crimen hoc solum*: that the *Argo* has returned. *Argo* is nom. in apposition to *hoc*.

238. The tenses in vv. 238-241 suggest the figure of vision—she is dwelling upon the scene as if it were before her eyes. *placeat*: suppose it had pleased—condition.

240. *gener*: Jason.

244. "All the reward I received for all my crimes is now in your possession."

245. *damna*: (*a long*) imperative.

246. *redde crimen*: Condemn the accused, if you will. but restore the object (Jason) for which the crime was committed.

248. *peti*; for *petii*, *petivi* (cf. *redit*, v. 984).

252 ff. "That I am not one who. . . spurns with haughty foot the unfortunate I seem to have shown clearly enough in choosing as son-in-law an exile."

256. *quippe*: This word, in connection with a relative as here, or alone as in v. 438, introduces a clause of cause or reason.

257. *Acastus*: son and successor of Pelias as king of Iolcos (v. 133 and note). The fear in which Jason stood of him is expressed in vv. 521, 526.

261. *plae*: filial (see note on *pictus*, v. 438).

262. *eausam*: cf. v. 202 and note.

265. *vestro...a coetu*: from companionship with you (and the powers of evil you invoke).

270. *herbas*: used in her magic rites.

271. *sollicita*: imperative.

274. *non sola veni*: cf. *qui averit ferat*, v. 197, and *redde comitem*, v. 273.

276. "For him, not for me, was Pelias slain." Medea argues that Jason, who had profited by her crimes, was at least equally guilty with herself, who had done them. She

puts it with still greater force to Jason himself (*cc.* 500, 501 *cf. sontes duos, r.* 275).

277. Add my flight (from home), my plundering (the theft of the golden fleece), my desertion of my father, the mutilation of my brother--the guilt is not mine but Jason's.

282. *illud* here, as often, anticipates a thought still to be expressed. Here it is explained by the clause *ne...trahat*.

287. *Fortuna...dubia*: *cf. v.* 219 and note. *Dubia* is known to be nominative, because its final syllable falls into the fourth foot of the *senarius*, where Seneca never uses a spondee (*cf.* Horace's statement, *A. P.* 254-258). The *a* therefore is short.

288. *moram*: respite.

293. Do you deny me a respite (even one which is) too brief for my tears (at parting with my children)?

296. 'Tis more than enough, though you should strike off a portion. *recidas*: *i* long.

299. *Isthmo*: the abl. of place whence, used without a preposition, as in names of towns. The use is extended still further in poetry to nouns of almost any meaning (*cf. tectis, r.* 380; *penatibus, r.* 450). *sacra thalami*: the marriage rites.

SCENE 3 (*vv.* 301-370). The chorus sings the daring of the Argonauts, the dangers of the deep, and the changes that have followed its conquest.

301-308. *Cf.* Horace, *C.* 1, 3, 9-12.

304. After this verse occur two others in the mss., which Leo rejects as mere dittography to *cc.* 301, 302. Following recent editors he inserts *cc.* 329-334 after *v.* 308.

339. For the Golden Age, of which some features are given in the following verses, *cf. Oct.* 396-406; Vergil, *Ecl.* 4; Ovid, *Met.* 1, 89-112; Horace, *Epod.* 16, 41-64; Tibullus, 1, 3, 33-46. *candida*: white, unspotted, pure.

331. *piger*: unambitious, content.

333. *parvo dives*: a favorite idea with Horace (*cf. C.* 2, 16, 13 ff.; *C.* 2, 18, 11 ff.; *C.* 3, 16, 39 ff., etc.).

309. *sidera*: the constellations, by means of whose positions the sailor in ancient times determined the points of the compass. Their importance to him is manifest from the constant allusions in all the poets.

311. *pluvias Hyades*: see Cl. Dict., art. *Hyades*. The season at which this constellation rose and set with the sun was marked by frequent and heavy storms, and the poets connected the two circumstances as cause and effect (cf. Horace, *C.* 1, 3, 14; Cicero, *N. D.* 2, 111).

313. *Oleniae .caprae*: *Amalthea*, the nurse of the infant Jove, described now as a beautiful woman (see Cl. Dict., artt. *Aega*, *Amalthea*), now as a she-goat, in each case translated to the skies and made a constellation. The season when it first became visible was stormy, hence the allusion in this passage.

315. *plaustra*: the two bears, major and minor, still known in parts of Europe from their form as "the wagons"—for example, "Charles's wain" in England. Being near the pole they were objects of great interest to the mariner and are referred to constantly in the poets (cf. *vv.* 405, 696, where they are called *arctos* and *ferae*). *Attica*: another reading is *Arctica*, which Leo rejects because, as he says, "*Arcticus* is a word not used by good poets, except those writing on astronomy." There are two versions of the myth regarding Bootes the *Arctophylax*. One makes him Arcas the son of Callisto (cf. Ovid, *Met.* 2, 401–530), translated to heaven, while the other identifies him with Icarus, an Athenian, father of Erigone. This latter form would justify the use of the adjective *Attica*, transferring the epithet from Bootes to the wagon he drives. He is thought of variously as driver of the wagon, keeper of the bears (*Arctophylax*—cf. *Thyestes* 874; Cicero, *N. D.* 2, 109), and holder of the serpent—the constellation Draco, which winds through space near by (*Ophiuchus*, *v.* 698; or in Latin *Anguitenens*, Cicero, *N. D.* 2, 108). *tardus*: because the constellation, close to

the pole, appears almost motionless (cf. *Oct.* 233; Ovid, *Met.* 2, 176, 177).

316. *nondum . . . habebant*: cf. Ovid, *Met.* 1, 132.

318. *Tiphys*: For his fate see v. 617 ff.

321. *prolato . . . notos*: catch the breeze with yards trimmed, tack, sail close to the wind.

335. *bene*: modifies *dissaepti*, not *traxit*—brought together the lands well (wisely) separated before (cf. Horace *C.* 1, 3, 21 ff.).

336. *Thessala*: because built and commanded by Jason, of the Thessalian town Iolcos (cf. *Thessalica trabe*, *Agam.* 120).

338. *partem metus*: There were terrors enough for man before, but his conquest of the sea added new ones.

339. *mare sepositum*: (formerly) an element apart.

340. *illa*: the Argo—*Thessala pinus*, v. 335.

342. *duo montes*: the Symplegades (v. 456; cf. *scopulos vagantes*, v. 610).

347. Let slip the tiller from his nerveless hand.

349. *vocem perdidit*: referring to the figure-head of the Argo, hewn from the speaking oak of Dodona and itself possessed of the power of speech.

350. *virgo*: Scylla (cf. Homer, *Od.* 12, 73–100, 234–259; Ovid, *Met.* 14, 1–74; Vergil, *Aen.* 3, 420–428).

354. *totiens latrante*: barking from each of its (six) throats. *malo*: monster.

355. *dirae pestes*: the sirens (cf. Homer, *Od.* 12, 52 ff.).

357. *resonans*: sounding back, in contest with the sirens.

360. *sirena*: acc. “Orpheus almost compelled the siren to follow, (though) wont to hold captive with her song the passing ships.” For Orpheus’ power see vv. 626–629; Ovid, *Met.* 10, 86 ff.; and Cl. Dict., art. *Orpheus*. The alliteration in vv. 359–362 may be accidental, yet it is by no means uncommon in these tragedies.

363. *merces*: appositive to *pellis* and *Medea*—“wares

worthy the first ship." The idea that a sin was committed in crossing the sea and so overstepping the bounds appointed by the Creator (cf. v. 335 and note) is still present here, with the further implication that the sin has brought about its own punishment. *Mercēs* reminds us that among the ancients the trader was the principal voyager, and that the myth of the Argo and the golden fleece may represent allegorically the beginning of commerce for the Greeks.

364. *nunc iam*: *now*, transferring the thought from the Argo's time to that of the chorus, and perhaps in the poet's mind to his own day, when commerce had attained such great proportions.

365. *Palladia*: see v. 2 and note. Here ablative.

369. *motus*: *sc. est*.

372. *orbis*: cf. *orbi*, v. 5 and note.

375-379. This remarkable prophecy would be all the more remarkable if we could suppose that Seneca meant by it anything more than a vague reference to some ideal Atlantis, such as Plato had described.

ACT III

SCENE 1 (vv. 380-396). The nurse describes the fierce passion of Medea, as shown by her features and gait.

380. *tectis*: cf. *Isthmo*, v. 299 and note.

381. *resiste*: intransitive—"Pause."

383. *maenas*: The *maenades* (*bacchantes*, *thyiades*) were the female priests of Bacchus, famed for their wild orgies. In v. 806 Medea applies the term to herself.

384. *Nysae*: a city in India, where, according to one account Bacchus was reared. One of his Greek names (*Dionysus*) has been supposed to be a derivative of this word.

393. *facile*: adjective.

394. *vincet*: outdo. *veteris*: as displayed in the cases of her brother Absyrtus and her uncle Pelias.

SCENE 2 (vv. 397-430). Medea gives expression to her contempt for

Jason's cowardice in truckling to those in power, reiterates her purpose of revenge, and overrides the nurse's timid protest.

397. *odio*: dat. *misera*: addressing herself. *quem*: interrogative.

398. *imitare amorem*: Copy your love, which acknowledged no limitation, but sacrificed all to itself. *faces*: torches carried in the marriage procession, hence marriage—here that of the princess Creusa to Jason.

401. From the old idea that the earth is a circular plain surrounded by the ocean, philosophers had advanced by this time to the conception of a universe in three dimensions, of which the central body was the earth, poised in space (cf. Ovid, *Met.* 1, 12, 13: [*nec*] *circumfuso pendebat in aere tellus* | *ponderibus librata suis*).

403. *derit*: *deerit* (cf. *derat*, v. 992).

404. *siccas*: never setting (lit., dry). The *arctoe* (*ursa major* and *ursa minor*—see v. 315 and note) at the latitude of Greece and Rome, as at our own, were always above the horizon—did not dip into the surrounding ocean as constellations farther from the pole were thought to do (cf. *vetitum mare*, v. 758; *vetito aequore*, Ovid, *Met.* 2, 172; *immunis aquis*, *Agam.* 69; *numquam occidentes*, Cicero, *N. D.* 2, 105.)

410. *Titana*: acc. Enceladus, who was buried alive beneath Mt. Aetna (Vergil, *Aen.* 3, 578-582). Ovid (*Met.* 5, 352) follows Aeschylus in making it Typhoeus who was punished thus. The myths of the Titans and the Giants are greatly confused.

413. *impetum irasque*: hendiadys.

415. *Thessalici ducis*: Acastus (cf. v. 257), who had demanded that Medea be given up for punishment for the murder of his father.

417. *cesserit...dederit*: suppose he has—cf. *plaveat*, v. 238.

418. *coniugem*: Medea.

419. *ferox*: ironical, and rendered intensely emphatic

both by its unusual position and by its antithesis to *extimuit*.

422. *non queror*: Note the sudden change of tone. "I do not complain that the time is (too) short. It will go far."

424. *nullus*: sc. *dies*.

428. *pereas*: The "general" second person.

SCENE 3 (vv. 431-578) Jason enters, lamenting his hard fate, which places him in such a dilemma that he must either be faithless to Medea or forfeit his life. Medea bids him flee with her, recounts her services and sacrifices in his behalf, declares him equally guilty with herself of all she had done for his sake, and, when he confesses his fear of the king and leaves her, she breaks forth into a torrent of passionate words, and begins preparation at once for the consummation of her revenge.

432. *malam*: agrees with *sortem*—"Evil alike when it smites and when it spares."

434. *fidem praestare*: show fidelity, i. e., be faithful.

437. *misero*: sc. *mihi*—apparent agent.

438. *pietas*: reverent affection, commonly that of a child for his parents, here of a father for his children. In v. 779 *pie* is said of Althaea's affection for her brother; in Oct. 52 and 737 it stands for the nurse's love for her foster child and in Oct. 844 for the prefect's devotion to his imperial master. See also vv. 545, 943. *quippe*: causal as in v. 256, but here unaccompanied by another connective. *sequeretur*: lit. follow, hence share.

441. *ipsam*: Medea—so *iratum*, v. 444.

444. *animus*: sc. *meus*.

445. *viso memet*: abl. abs.—at sight of me.

446. *fert . . prae se*: displays, exhibits. *odia*: plural of an abstract noun, where we should use the singular.

447. *fugimus*, Iason, *fugimus*: "We have fled, we are fleeing (or going to flee)." The first *fugimus* (with *u* long) is perfect, the second (*u* short) is present. As Leo remarks, Seneca did not admit the tribrach at the beginning of the senarius. *hoc*: explained by its appositive, *mutare*.

450. *penatibus*: abl., like *Isthmo* (c. 299) and *tectis* (c. 380).

451. *at quo*: Mss. have *ad quos*. Supply *me* as object of *remittis*. The question is repeated in c. 459.

453. *quas peti terras iubes*: (cf. Euripides, *Med.* 502 ff.). This is the sentence quoted by Quintilian (*Inst. Orat.* 9, 2, 8) to illustrate one use of the rhetorical question, which he says is used, "...To throw odium on the person addressed; as Medea says in Seneca, '*Quas peti terras iubes?*'" This is one of the few bits of external evidence we have of the authorship of the play.

456. *adulterum*: lover, i. e., Jason.

457. *Tempe*: (e long) a Greek acc. plural.

458. *aperni tibi... clausi mihi*: a good example of the antithesis in which Seneca delights.

459. *imperas nec das*: "bricks without straw."

462. *paelicem*: a favorite word in the speech of Seneca's heroines (cf. c. 495, *Agam.* 185, *Oct.* 124, 185, etc.). Here and in c. 495 Medea applies it with pathetic irony to herself, but usually it is taken as a term of reproach to a rival, as in c. 920.

469. *hostis subiti*: the *terrigenae*, warriors who sprang into life full armed when Jason had sown the dragon's teeth.

470. *miles*: singular for plural (cf. *milite*, Vergil, *Aen.* 2, 20). *occidit*: fell, perished.

471. *spolia Phrixei arietis*: the golden fleece (*aurea pellis*, c. 361), whose recovery was the object of the argo-nautic expedition. It was Phrixus who was carried on the ram's back to Colchis (see Cl. Dict., artt. *Phrixus*, *Helle*).

473. *monstrum*: the sleepless dragon which guarded the fleece in Colchis. It was drugged by Medea (Ovid, *Met.* 7, 149-156), who thus made it possible for her lover to gain possession of the prize. *fratrem*: Absyrtus. Two accounts of his fate are given, one that he was sent by his father with a fleet to overtake and bring back his sister,

and lost his life either in fair fight with the Argonauts or by treachery (Hyginus, *Fab.* 23); and the other, more common and adopted by Seneca (cf. *cc.* 133, 278, 963), that being still a boy he was carried away by Medea in her flight, and when their father was about to overtake them, was cut in pieces and his limbs thrown into the sea one by one in order to delay the pursuit.

474. Guilt incurred not once (but more than once) in one act of guilt—i. e., not merely was the brother slain, but his body was mutilated, and, to crown all, was cast unburied into the sea (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 6, 325-330).

475. *natas*: sc. *Pelia* (or *Peliae*). See *c.* 133 and note.

479. *monstra*: the fire-breathing bulls, the *terrigenes* (*v.* 470), the guardian serpent (*v.* 473).

481. *coniugi*: gen. of *coniugium*.

482. *miserere*: used absolutely—have pity. *felix*: kindly. *redde...vicem*: reciprocate.

483. *Scythae*: Here and in *v.* 528 Medea calls her people Scythians. This was a rather vague term applied by the ancients to the inhabitants of Central Asia and what is now the southern part of Russia. The Colchians have been described variously as a colony of Egyptians (Herodotus), of Jews, of Syrians and of Hindoos. Being on the borders of Scythia they may be spoken of carelessly as belonging to that race.

485. *quas*: *et eas*—"And, as the palace, filled with treasure, could hardly contain *these* riches (*opibus*), we adorned the woods with gold."

489. *redde...sua*: The possessive here relates to the thought-subject (not the grammatical subject) of the sentence (cf. *sunt hic sua praeemia laudi*, Vergil, *Aen.* 1, 461). For the idea cf. Medea's demands of Creon in *cc.* 197, 272, 273.

490. The truth of this pitiful plea of Jason's is confirmed by Creon's statement (*v.* 184).

492. *poenam putabam*: sc. *fugam*. Note the antithesis between *poenam* and *munus*, and the strong irony of the

latter. (Cf. Ovid's expression, *poenam pro munere poscis* (*Met.* 2, 99).

496. *olicit*: throw up as a reproachful reminder.

500. *tua...fecit*: cf. *vv.* 275, 276, 278.

501. *arguant*: cf. *placeat*, *v.* 238, and note.

503. *tibi*: in your sight.

504. *cuius acceptae*: the construction of noun and passive participle met in the familiar *ab urbe condita* of Livy. Here we may translate, "which one is ashamed of having (so) received."

507. *placare*: imperative.

512. *Phoebi*: cf. *v.* 28 and note. *Sisyphi*: The royal house of Corinth was descended from Sisypheus, whose ancestry ran back through Aeolus, Hellen, Deucalion and Prometheus to Iapetus, one of the original Titans. Compared with the divine progeny of Phoebus his offspring would be "*foeda*" (*v.* 511).

517. *nos...sine*: The reading here is corrupt and the sense obscure. Perhaps the most satisfactory solution is found in making *certemus* subordinate to *sine* and *confligere* complementary to *certemus*: "Let me (us) strive to contend (with the king); let the prize be Jason." Leo places a period after *confligere*.

523. *caede cognata*: Acastus and Jason were cousins.

529. *ne cupias vide*: "Is fear the real motive of your action, or is it ambition?"

534. *deligenti...istum*: that discriminates between us.

545. *pietas*: cf. *v.* 438 and note. *memet*: *Cogat* here has two objects, *memet* representing the person and the *ut* clause the act required. It is a rare construction, two accusatives, or acc. of person and infinitive representing the act, being more common.

547. *perusti*: seared. In *v.* 484 *perustis* had its more literal sense of sun-burned, swarthy.

550. *tenetur*: I have a hold upon him. *Sic...locus*:

aside. For the thought implied cf. *v.* 26 and note; see also Euripides, *Med.* 813.

551. *abeuntem*: agrees here with the subject (*me*) of the infinitive. Instead of this the following constructions might have been used after *liceat*: (1) *abeunti loqui* (most common), (2) *ut abiens loquar*, (3) *abiens loquar*, or (4) simply the infinitive, as in *v.* 542.

555. *melioris...nostri*: my better self.

556. *haec*: sc. *verba*.

559. *miserias lenit quies*: With this philosophical remark Jason leaves the stage.

560. *itane est*: For the spirit of the speaker see *v.* 117 and note.

562. *age*: addressing herself.

565. *hae...timere*: Attack at a point where none can conceive of danger—alluding again (cf. *v.* 26 and note) to the inhuman purpose gradually maturing in her mind.

571. *pignus...generis*: an earnest of his descent (cf. the *pignora* demanded by Phaethon, Ovid, *Met.* 2, 8).

575. *nati*: sc. *mei (nostri)*. *nubenti*: the bride, who was said by the Romans to *veil* herself for her husband.

578. *arae*: in preparation for her invocation of the powers of darkness (*v.* 740 ff.).

SCENE 4 (vv. 579-660). The chorus likens woman's fury to the fiercest forces of nature, then recalls the fate of Jason's fellow-voyagers and prays that the gods may consider their punishment enough and spare him.

579-582. "Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turned
Nor Hell a fury like a woman scorned."

590. *Haemus*: a mountain range on the north of Thrace, believed by the ancients to be of amazing height (cf. Pliny, *N. H.* 4, 18). The thawing in spring of the deep snows which had fallen through the winter would produce for rustic on-lookers in the distance very much the same effect as if the range itself were melting (*tabuit*) away.

596. *mare qui subegit*: Jason.

597. *vinci*: the subject is *regna*. *dominus profundī*: Neptune (cf. *profundī* . . . *dominator maris*, v. 4).

598. *regna secunda*: the sea (cf. *secundo maria sceptro regis*, *Herc. Fur.* 599; *secundum fluctibus regnum moves*, *Phaëdra* 904). On the dethronement of Kronos (Saturn) by his sons the latter cast lots for the several portions of his dominions (Homer, *Il.* 15, 184 ff.). Jupiter thus received the heavens, Neptune the *second* choice, the sea, and Pluto the third (cf. *tertiæ sortis*, *Herc. Fur.* 609, 833), the unseen land of the dead.

599. *currus*: of the sun-god (Ovid, *Met.* 2, 107-110).

600. *iuvenis*: Phaëthōn (see Ovid, *Met.* 2, 1-328).

604. *populo priori*: former generations.

605. *sacro . . . sancta*: *sacrosancta*, divided by *tnesis*. The sense is *inviolable, immutable*. *violente*: voc., best translated by an English adverb.

606. *foedera*: laws of nature. For the sentiment cf. *nere . . . naturæ pollue foedus*, Ovid, *Met.* 10, 353. The particular law referred to here is that by which the gods were supposed to have confined man's sphere of conquest to the land and forbidden him the sea (cf. v. 335 and note; Horace, *C.* 1, 3, 21 ff.). In vv. 607-667 is given an account of the fate that befell several argonautic heroes.

610. *scopulos vagantes*: the Symplegades (cf. v. 342 and note; v. 456).

612. *barbara . . . ora*: Colchis.

613. *externi . . . auri*: foreign gold the fleece.

614. *exitu*: abl. means, with *placit*—by a dreadful end.

617. *in primis*: may be taken literally—among the first (in time)—or as the phrase *imprimis*, especially. Tiphys lost his life before the Argo reached Colchis and was succeeded at the helm by Erginus (*indocto magistro*, v. 619), or, according to some accounts, by Ancaeus, a son of Neptune.

622. *Aulis . . . retinet carinas*: This allusion suggests

the idea that the fleet for the expedition against Troy had gathered in the interval since the Argo's return, as it was at Aulis that Agamemnon was detained by unfavorable winds until he consented to sacrifice his daughter to Diana. Tiphys was a native of Boeotia, and it is intimated here that the Boeotian port Aulis, admonished by his fate of the perils of the sea, was trying to detain others who would venture forth. The question of chronology need not trouble us, as there is properly no chronology of this mythical period.

624. *stare querentes*: lamenting that they are not allowed to sail.

625. *ille*: Orpheus, who is said to have been the son of Apollo and the muse (*carmena*) Calliope. The instances given here of his power to charm inanimate objects with his lyre are the familiar ones usually given. Ovid (*Met.* 10, 1-77) tells the story of his passion for Eurydice and his descent into Hades to rescue her from death. It is said further that the women of Thrace, incensed at the bard's devotion to the memory of his lost wife, and consequent neglect of themselves, tore him in pieces (hence *sparsus*, *per agros*). The head (*v.* 631) floated down the Hebrus river and across the sea to Lesbos (Ovid, *Met.* 11, 1-60), thus transferring the power of lyric song to that island, where Alcaeus and Sappho, the first lyrist known to classic history, afterward lived and sang.

631. *tristi*: saddened by the burden it bore.

632. *notam*: because he had crossed it before, in his quest of Eurydice (cf. Ovid, *Met.* 11, 61- *quae loca riderat ante*).

634. *Alcides*: Hercules. Episodes in his career furnish the theme of two of the Senecan tragedies *Hercules Furens* and *Hercules Oetaeus*. *Aquilone natos*: Calais and Zetes, the Boreades, called in *v.* 231 *sati Borea*. They were among the numerous victims of Hercules' prowess.

635. *Neptuno genitum*: Periclymenus (Ovid, *Met.* 12, 556-572).

637. *pacem*: conquest—peace by subjugation.

640. Cf. *vv.* 777, 778. The tragedy *Hercules Oetaeus* deals with this theme.

641. *gemini cruoris*: the blood of the centaur Nessus, who was of *two-fold* nature, half man, half horse.

642. *nuptae*: Deianira (see Cl. Dict., artt. *Hercules* and *Deianira*, and cf. Ovid, *Met.* 9, 141–272).

644. *saetiger*: the Calydonian boar (see Cl. Dict., artt. *Ancaeus*, *Atalanta*, etc.).

645. *impius*: because a breach of filial reverence is involved (see *pietas*, *v.* 438, and note). *moreris*: from *mori*. *dextra matris*: See Cl. Dict., artt. *Althaea*, *Meleager* (cf. *vv.* 779, 780; Ovid, *Met.* 8, 445–525).

646. *meruere . . . expiavit*: a confusion of two thoughts. It might be expressed either (1) *meruere cuncti poenam (mortem) qua crimen expiavit*, or (2) *commisere cuncti morte quod crimen expiavit*. In either case the thought is that having ventured upon the treacherous and forbidden element all deserved the fate that had befallen Hylas, i. e. drowning.

648. *puer*: Hylas (see Cl. Dict.).

649. *tutas*: Hylas was lost not on the stormy ocean but in the quiet waters of a spring, where no one would look for danger.

651. *fonte timendo*: abl. abs. of cause—Since it is the spring that is to be feared, go, plow the ocean fearlessly (*fortes*).

656. *ille*: Mopsus, the seer.

659. *Nauplius*: There are three of this name in the old mythology. Seneca here identifies the Argonaut with another of the name, the father of Palamedes, who was incensed at the treatment his son had received from the Greeks and sought revenge by luring their returning fleet upon the rocks by means of a false beacon (*igne fallaci*). He is said to have met a like fate later, himself. See also the account given by the courier Eurybates in *Agam.* 558–570, where the expression *perfidia face* is used.

660. Peiper noticed that in order to preserve the Sapphic strophe a half-line must be supplied, and Leo suggests *occidet proles*. The passage is not clear, but the best punctuation appears to be that given in the text, which makes Oileus the subject of *pendet*, the father's name being used here to designate the son, Ajax (cf. r. 662 and note).

661. It was Ajax, the son of Oileus, who perished on his voyage homeward from Troy *fulmine et ponto* (see *Agam.* 528-556; *Aen.* 1, 43 ff.; Homer, *Od.* 4, 449 ff.). Our author here intimates that the real reason for his destruction was his father's offense in having sailed in the Argo (*patria pendet crimine poenas*).

662. *coniugis Pheraei*: Admetus, king of Pherae, whose wife Alcestis voluntarily gave up her life to save his (*impendens animam marito*), and thus perhaps unconsciously helped atone for the sin of her father, Pelias, who had instigated the expedition of the Argo (rr. 664-665). This reading makes *uxor* a second subject of *pendet*.

664. *ipse . . . Pelias*: see r. 133 and note.

667. *angustas . . . undas*: not amid the mighty waves of ocean but the bubblings of a caldron - a most unheroic fate.

669. The chorus closes with an appeal to the angry gods to be satisfied with the fate of those who had fallen already and spare their leader Jason, who, being under command (*iusso*) of another (Pelias), was not guilty himself.

ACT IV

SCENE 1 (vv. 670-739). The nurse in a monologue describes Medea's gathering of deadly plants and animals from heaven and earth and hell, and her use of the magic art in preparing a decoction of their poisons.

670. Scan thus: *Paet a | nimus hor | ret may | na per | nicies | adest*. The first and the fifth feet are tribrachs, the second an anapest (most unusual in Seneca).

671. *immane quantum augescit*: how fearfully grows.

673. *furentem*: sc. *Medeam*; so with *aggressam* and *trahentem*.

674. *caelum trahentem*: cf. *te (Lunam) traho*, Ovid, *Met.* 7, 207.

675. *attonito*: bewildered. The incantations for which preparation was ordered to be made in *rc.* 577, 578 are described in this scene.

676. *penetrale funestum*: the shrine (cf. *arae*, *r.* 578).

677. *totas opes effundit*: is lavishing all her powers. Notice that all the principal verbs in the sentence (*effundit*, *promit*, *explicat*, *vocat*) are present. The nurse is looking on and describing what she sees.

678. *etiam ipsa*: There were powers which even Medea had shrunk from invoking before, but in this supreme moment fears and scruples alike are swallowed up in her all-absorbing thirst for vengeance.

680. *laeva*: with the left hand, as ill-omened.

682, 683. *Libyae. Taurus*: extremes of climate. Medea's power ranged over them all.

687. *exertat*: *exsertat*. *quaerit*: sc. *eos*.

693. *fraude vulgari*: such arts as the common herd can use.

695. *anguis*: the constellation Draco (see *r.* 315 and note, and cf. Aratus as translated by Cicero, *N. D.* 2, 106 - *Has [arctos] inter, veluti rapido cum gurgite flumen, torrus Draco serpit*).

696. *ferae*: the *arctoe*.

697. The constellation *ursa major* was known to the Greeks in Homer's time (cf. *Il.* 18, 487; *Od.* 5, 275), while the *ursa minor*, though long known to the Phoenicians, was not pointed out to the Greeks till the time of Thales.

698. *solvat Ophiuchus*: let the serpent-holder relax his close grip--i. e., release the serpent. For *Ophiuchus*, see *r.* 315 and note.

699. *virus*: acc.

700. *ausus*: which dared. *gemina numina*: Apollo,

and Diana. Only the former is usually described as the slayer of the python, and the oracle at Delphi, where the encounter took place, was sacred to him alone. Cf. the extension of the epithet *tonantibus* to Juno in v. 59.

702. *caede...sua*: When one of the hydra's nine heads was lopped off, two grew up in its place.

703. *tu...serpens*: the sleepless dragon (cf. *insomne monstrum*, v. 473, and note) which guarded the golden fleece in Colchis. It was made to sleep for the first time (*primum*) by Medea's sorcery (hence *sospite...cantibus...meis*). *ades*: imperative.

706. *frugis*: To the poison of serpents she now adds the juices of poisonous plants.

707. *Eryx*: the well-known mountain in Sicily, site of the temple of Venus Erycina.

711. *divites*: an epithet frequently applied to the Arabs by Roman poets, without very rational grounds (cf. Horace, *C.* 3, 24, 2; *Epist.* 1, 6, 6, etc.). *linunt*: smear, here poison.

713. *Suebae*: fem., as if those who dealt in witchcraft and poisons would naturally be women. *Hercyniis*: This reading is more consistent with *Suebae* than is *Hyrcañis*, though it is inaccurate to speak of the Suevi, who lived farther toward the north, as gathering herbs in the Hercynian forest. Hyrcania lay to the east of the Caspian sea.

725. *gemmafer*: The diamonds of India were known at a very early day, and their fame reached the western world, but in a vague and fabulous form (cf. Horace, *C.* 1, 22, 7, *fabulosus Hydaspes*). Claudian, writing in the fourth century of our era, spoke of the *gemmis Hydaspeis* (*de III Consulatū Honorii*, 4).

726. *nomen...dedit*: The *provincia Baetica* received its name from the stream.

727. *Hesperia*: a general term for western—in the direction of *Hesperus*, the evening star. To the Greeks it sometimes meant Italian (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 1, 530). Here

and often to the Romans it meant Spanish (cf. Horace, *C.* 1, 36, 4).

728, 729. Not only the location but also the time when it could best be gathered was considered.

731 ff. Cf. the witches' song over the caldron in *Macbeth*, Act 3, scene 4, *cc.* 1-38.

731. *serpentium*: the regular form of the gen. plu. In *c.* 805 *serpentum* is written for metrical reasons (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 12, 848).

734. *scelerum artifex*: Medea (cf. *c.* 121).

735. *discreta ponit*: separates, distinguishes.

737. *verba*: magic incantations.

738. *gradu*: tone (cf. *ab ima [voce] ad summam multi sunt gradus*, Quintilian, *I.O.* 11, 3, 15).

739. *mundus tremit*: nature shuddered.

SCENE 2 (vv. 740-848). Medea invokes the aid of the infernal gods, the shades of the wicked dead, and Hecate, patron of magic, in a rhapsody of sustained intensity; and expresses her assurance and satisfaction that her prayer is answered.

740-848. In this long speech of Medea (rather a *canticum* than a speech) the depth of her emotion and its varying nature are seen in the repeated changes of measure (see Introduction, p. 8).

743. *supplicis*: for *supplicis*, abl. abs. with *remissis*. The lines following give details. *thalamos novos*: of Jason and Creusa (for a possible sense of *novos* cf. *c.* 894 and note).

745. *Pirenidas*: acc. plural of *Pirenix*, adjective from *Pirene*, the name of a famous fountain at Corinth. Tantalus is variously described as having been king of Lydia, of Phrygia, of Argos and of Corinth. Our author evidently adopts the last version here. His crime and its punishment are referred to constantly by classical writers as well known (e. g., Horace, *S.* 1, 1, 68; Ovid, *Met.* 4, 457; Cicero, *de Fin.* 1, 18; Homer, *Od.* 11, 581). See also *Oct.* 621 ff. and *Thy.* 4-12, where these same characters (Ixion, Tantalus,

Sisyphus) and their torments are mentioned in much the same way.

746. *socero*: Creon, who, as another king of Corinth, is named in connection with Tantalus.

749. *vestras...manus*: The Danaïdes had slain their husbands, and the crime which Medea contemplated was worthy of them.

750. *vocata...veni*: The participle agrees with *tu*, the subject of *veni*, and is feminine because *luna* (Phoebe, Diana, Hecate), not *sidus*, is the thought-antecedent of *tu*; *induta* and *minax*, c. 751, have the same agreement. *sidus*: in apposition to *tu*.

751. *fronte non una*: cf. *triformis*, v. 7, and note.

752. Having finished the solemn invocation Medea recounts some of the wonders she has wrought by the aid of these powers. *more gentis*: with *solvens*.

753. *nudo...pede*: cf. *nuda pedem*, Ovid, *Met.* 7, 183.

758. *et solem et astra*: i. e., at the same time. *vetitum...tetigistis*: cf. v. 404 and note.

759. *temporum...vices*: the seasons. I have caused spring flowers to bloom in summer and grain to ripen in winter, and water to flow up hill.

763. *Hister*: the Danube in its lower course. *tot ora*: cf. Tacitus, *Ger.* 1, 3; Pliny, *N. H.* 4, 24.

768. *in medio*: in mid-heaven.

769. *Hyades*: taken as a representative constellation. *labant*: faltered in their course.

771. *tibi*: for thee, i. e., for Phoebe. *cruenta*: abl.

772. *novena...ligat*: each bound with nine serpent-coils. *Novena* is nom. sing., agreeing with *serpens*; *quae* is acc. plur.

773. *discors*: rebellious. *Typhoeus*: one of the *gigantes* (cf. v. 410 and note).

775. *vectoris*: Nessus the centaur, who served as ferryman at the river Evenus.

777. Cf. *Here. Oct.* 725 ff.

779. *facem*: the fire-brand on whose preservation Meleager's life depended. There may be a deeper meaning too in placing in the mouth of Medea, who was about to slay her children, this mention of Althaea, who had caused the death of her son.

782. *dum...fugit*: cf. Ovid, *Met.* 7, 2 4; Vergil, *Aen.* 3, 211-213.

785. *tripodas*: (*a* short) acc. plu. of the Greek *tripus*.

787-842. Here follows a rhapsody in anapests, whose tone fairly entitles the speaker to the epithet *maenas* used by herself in *v.* 809 and applied to her by the chorus in *v.* 849. It is addressed to Hecate.

787. *Triviae*: Hecate, so called because her shrines were frequently placed at points where *three* roads met.

790. *lurida*: nom. *maesta*: abl. *Thessalicis minis*: An eclipse of sun or moon was a cause of great terror in ancient times, and when one occurred attempts were made to avert the catastrophe by the beating of drums and the blowing of trumpets (cf. Tacitus, *Ann.* 1, 28, 3).

791. *caelum...legit*: glides through the vault of heaven (cf. *pontum legit*, Vergil, *Aen.* 2, 207).

793. *pallida*: nom.

796. *pretiosa...aera*: The bronze vases and statues made at Corinth were proverbially fine and valuable. Here the word seems to mean musical instruments of bronze:

797. *caespitem*: altar of turf.

806. *maenas*: appositive to the subject of *feriam* (see *v.* 787 and note; also *v.* 849). *sacro*: with *cultro*.

807. *manet*: (*a* long) from *manere*, not *manere*.

809. *caros...cruores*: another intimation of her purpose (cf. *vr.* 26 and note, 550, 848). She calls upon the sword to taste her own blood (cf. *feriam brachia*, *v.* 806), that it may not hesitate when called upon to drink the same from the veins of her sons.

810. *sacrum laticem*: her own blood—fulfilment of the promise in *feriam*, *v.* 806.

813. *ignosce*: sc. *mihi*, or take abs. slutely.

814. *Persei*: (*e* long, *i* short) voc. Hecate is so called as being the daughter of Perses and granddaughter of Persa and Sol (cf. Statius, *Theb.* 4, 482; also *Perseides herbar.* Ovid, *Rem. Amoris*, 263).

820. *auro*: of her gift to the bride.

820-830. The poison she is concocting is described in its effect as if it were liquid fire, and then the mythical sources of fire are enumerated.

822. *furta*: the stealing of fire from heaven for man. *viscere feto*: A similar account is given by Vergil (*Aen.* 6, 595-600) of the punishment of the giant Tityos in Hades. Vergil's *fibris renatis* compares well with *riscere feto* here.

823. *condere*: store up as here in the golden ornament (cf. *condita*, v. 835).

827. *cognato*: Phaethon was son and Mecea granddaughter of the sun-god.

831. *tacitum*: latent.

835 ff. *visus, tactus*: acc. *artus*: nom.

840. *latratus*: Hecate was represented sometimes as having three heads (cf. *triformis*, v. 7, and especially *triceps*, Ovid, *Met.* 7, 194), one of a horse, one of a lion, one of a dog; and more often as merely attended by dogs, whose barking announced her approach (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 6, 257).

843 ff. The frenzy of her inspiration is gone, and there remains only the sullen determination to complete her vengeance.

846. *placate*: win.

848. *ultimo*: To her hearers the word would have its ordinary sense, to herself another, far deeper.

SCENE 3 (v. 849-878). The chorus describes the frenzy of Medea, gives utterance to its dread of her power, and prays for the speedy coming of night.

849. *cruenta*: nom. The sense may be literally blood-stained (cf. vv. 806-810), or it may refer to her past crimes the murder of brother and uncle.

850. *amore saevo*: her passion for Jason.

854. *riget*: is set.

856. Does not stand on the defensive, but dares attack.

857. *Sc. eam esse*.

858-865. The chorus observes Medea's intense emotion, evinced by change of color and uncertain gait (cf. *ec.* 382-389).

866, 867. Cf. Medea's own expression, *ec.* 397, 398.

871. *Colchis*: nom., referring to Medea.

874. Drive swiftly the sun-chariot. Medea's reprieve was to end with the day, hence the prayer that night might come quickly.

876. *alma*: The epithet commonly applied to *dies*, *sol*, *lux* and words of kindred sense here is given to *nox*.

878. *dux noctis*: cf. *gemini praeria temporis*, *v.* 71.

ACT V

SCENE 1 (vv. 879-890). A messenger narrates the destruction of Creon and his daughter by the unquenchable fire kindled by Medea's deadly gift. The chorus acts as interlocutor.

884. *quis cladis modus*: Mss. assign this question to the chorus. *Modus* may mean either manner or measure, probably the latter here (cf. *omnem, tota, urbi timetur*).

890. *praesidia*: the citadel. Acrocorinthus.

SCENE 2 (vv. 891, 892). The nurse urges Medea to fly for her life.

891. *Pelopea*: Pelops was the son of Tantalus (cf. *v.* 745 and note), and became king of Pisa in Elis. From his name the whole southern peninsula of Greece came to be called Pelops' island, *Peloponnesus*. Here the adjective is applied to Corinth either as the home of his father (*v.* 745 and note) or in the sense merely of Grecian (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 2, 193).

SCENE 3 (vv. 893-977). Medea exults in the success of her plans thus far, recalls with satisfaction her past deeds of crime, wavers in her purpose to destroy her sons, decides upon it, beholds the apparition of her murdered brother and finally ascends to the house-top to carry out the rest of her design.

893. *egone ut recedam*: a common form of expression when the question (generally rhetorical) is regarding some act which is inconceivable. It may be an ellipsis for *fletu potest ut*, etc. (cf. *v.* 929).

894. *nuptias novas*: cf. *thalamus novus*, *v.* 743. The idea may be, new in the sense that the scene is to be one of mourning instead of rejoicing.

897. You still love him if you are satisfied with depriving him of his bride. *furiose*: masculine, agreeing with *anime*.

898. *caelebs*: unwedded, single, widowed. Both *caelebs* and *viduus* are used indifferently of widowed persons and those who never have married.

899. *haut*: *haud*.

902. *languentem*: if you waver in your purpose.

905. *pietas vocetur*: in comparison with what is contemplated now. *faxis*: *feceris*.

907. *proludit*: merely played a prelude.

910. *Medea nunc sum*: cf. *v.* 171 and note.

912. *arcano*: the golden fleece.

913. *senis*: Pelias.

915. *non rudem*: cf. *rudes*, *v.* 908. Her hand is no longer unpracticed in crime.

916. *perfido hosti*: Jason, as in *v.* 920.

918. *nondum*: Yet it is clear that the idea had occurred to her at least as far back as her interview with Jason (*cc.* 549, 550), and hints of her growing purpose are given in *cc.* 565, 848.

920. *paelice*: Creusa (cf. 462 and note).

922. *Creusa peperit*: In seeking means for attaining the climax of her revenge she first wishes that her rival had left children behind her, and then exclaims that Jason's children (though her own as well) must now be thought of as Creusa's.

923. *ultimum*: crowning.

926 ff. For this wavering between right and wrong im-

